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ABSTRACT

The U.S. public education system, encumbered by an organizational structure developed at the turn of the century, is in trouble. This document presents a culminating discussion of the need to restructure the educational system. A strategy is suggested for examining the paradigms that maintain our educational system. A set of questions is provided for districts and schools to consider when redesigning the organizational structure. New methods are suggested that involve the whole community in defining and improving the system to ensure greater student success. Section 1 is a philosophical framework that reviews previous publications; considers the cultural misalignment between the community, the home, and the school; examines the failure of past reforms; and discusses shifts in the paradigms that shape the organizational structure of schools. Section 2 presents the practical application of the process and also contains an illustration of a new decision-making paradigm in action with examples from a gorup of Texas educators. The workbook included at the end of this section suggests one possible strategy for changing the system based on community beliefs and values. The appendixes include information about participating Texas educators and districts as well as a compilation of statements of belief about improving educational practice. Approximately 80 references are cited. (MLF)

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Weaving a New Paradigm: Steps to Organizing for Excellence

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INTRODUCTION

The content of this SEDL publication, *Weaving a New Paradigm: Steps to Organizing for Excellence,* is deceptively simple. It discusses a need and suggests a process. The philosophical framework discusses the need for restructuring the public educational system. That is the deceptive part. Most people know the educational system is highly resistant to change and acknowledge that past reforms have addressed surface aspects of the system rather than the more deeply imbedded cultural aspects. The assumption that we know what the problem is will lead some to skip over this part. It is only, however, in reminding ourselves that reform is a matter of knowledge, values, and beliefs, that we begin to understand why the educational system has been so resistant to change. And, it is in recognizing that our knowledge, values, and beliefs form our fundamental concepts -- our paradigms -- about how the world works, that we understand the part they play in guiding our choices and our strategies for solving problems. There is a need to discuss the paradigms that guide the organization of our educational system and to examine emerging paradigms that might offer creative ways to solve the problems that now threaten to overwhelm the system.

The simple part is the process. Offered as a practical application counterpart to the philosophical framework, "Steps to Organizing for Excellence," suggests a strategy for examining the paradigms that maintain our traditional educational system. It provides districts and schools with a set of questions to consider when redesigning the organizational structure of their system to meet the changing needs of their learning community. It's that simple. What isn't simple is being able to suspend the paradigms that have worked for us in the past, the paradigms by which so many of us have become successful, and to open ourselves to new possibilities.

The task is one that challenges school administrators, school boards, teachers, parents, state education agencies, and higher education. This publication is for all who are interested in examining what they believe about education and who are willing to take a risk. Our old, tried and true methods for dealing with problems in the educational system are becoming less and less effective. This publication offers suggestions for new methods that involve the whole community in defining and improving the system to ensure greater student success.

Section One: The Philosophical Framework is designed to accomplish the following goals:

1. to review the discussion on the need for restructuring the educational system presented in previous SEDL publications, *Dimensions of Effective Leadership* (Duttweiler & Hord, 1987), *Organizing for Excellence* (Duttweiler, 1988), and *Organizing the Educational System for Excellence: Harnessing the Energy of People* (Duttweiler & Mutchler, 1990);

2. to consider the cultural misalignment between the community, the home, and the school as one source of the escalating problems resistant to reform efforts;

3. to examine the failure of past reforms to significantly change the educational system; and

4. to discuss shifts in the paradigms that shape the organizational structure of the educational system and examine emerging paradigms that might provide ways of solving persistent problems that have defied past reform efforts.

Section Two: The Practical Application provides a rationale for the steps contained in the workbook, *Steps to Organizing for Excellence*. The section also contains an illustration of a new decision-making paradigm in action, and provides examples of several of the steps from actual deliberations by a group of Texas educators.

The entire workbook is included at the end of this section. The spiral binding allows the workbook proper to be separated from the rest of the contents and to be reproduced for use. The workbook suggests one possible strategy for changing the system based on community beliefs and values. It provides a set of questions to guide a district planning team in shaping a new organizational structure for the system.

SECTION ONE: THE PHILOSOPHICAL FRAMEWORK

Reviewing the Arguments for Restructuring the Educational System

Previous Documents

At a time when United States society is demanding that public education prepare *all* children for productive adulthood in the 21st century, many schools are failing to provide quality education for even the majority of their children. Our public education system, encumbered by an organizational structure developed at the turn of the century, is having difficulty in helping students overcome the disadvantages caused by family and socioeconomic conditions (Duttweiler, 1988). To compound the problem, the system is turning out a work force ill-prepared to meet the demands of a sophisticated, technological economy. One-fourth of the nation's young people drop out before finishing high school and another one-fourth do not graduate with the skills necessary to find work. Many of those who do find work need remedial help (Kearns & Doyle, 1988).

This document presents a culminating discussion of the need to restructure the educational system. This theme has been developed through a series of SEDL publications devoted to synthesizing the literature on improving teachers' and administrators' performance and on the organizational context in which teachers and administrators function. Past SEDL documents have addressed the leadership characteristics of effective school administrators, the organizational context in which teachers and administrators function effectively, and the difficulties encountered by past attempts to reform the system (Duttweiler & Hord, 1987; Duttweiler, 1988; Duttweiler & Mutchler, 1990). These publications have reviewed the research and practitioners' experience in these areas, and have attempted to present the best thinking concerning what needs to be done to improve the system. The following section summarizes the discussions presented in the documents.

Changes in Demographics

By the year 2000, the United States will be a nation in which one person in three will be non-white. In order to support an aging society, the United States educational system must prepare for educating a group of children who will be poorer, more ethnically and linguistically diverse, and will have more disabilities that affect their learning (Hodgkinson, 1988). Demographers predict that the U.S will add 20 million new workers to the workforce from 1980 to 2000 and that 82% of the new workers will be a combination of female, non-white, and immigrant. Only 18% of the new workers will be white, native-born males (Hoachlander, Kaufman, & Wilen, 1989; Hodgkinson, 1989).

Considering these statistics, the drop-out rate for minority students (with the exception of those of Asian origin) is not only a tragic waste of human potential, but is also an economic problem. While 14% of white students are dropping out, the drop-out rate for blacks is 24% and for Hispanics 40%, and those youth who fail to graduate rarely make significant contributions to the economy and often become an economic burden in one way or another (Hodgkinson, 1985). The United States cannot afford to allow such waste.

Changes in Social and Economic Conditions

The design of our educational system worked relatively well for the agricultural/industrial society it served. It brought schooling to millions of immigrants, generated the skills and conformity needed to staff the assembly lines, and accommodated a calendar dictated by agricultural seasons. The traditional system -- a product of Anglo-European culture and an industrial society -- was exemplified in the 1930's and 1940's: aspiring teachers had to pass rigorous exams to enter teaching, students had high standards set for them, homework was expected, and there was no social promotion. Parents pushed their children to excel, most students were attentive to their teachers, teaching was a respected profession, and there was a surplus of highly qualified teachers. Yet, in 1940, only 20% of students graduated from high school (Shanker, 1990). History suggests that the traditional model of education is dependent on at least five conditions: a cohesive family, a homogeneous dominant culture, a willingness to educate only a minority of the students to a high level, sufficient jobs for relatively unskilled workers, and a large supply of well-qualified teachers willing to work for comparatively low wages under difficult conditions (Shanker, 1990). The conditions described above simply do not exist today.

Today, we are finding that the old system cannot keep pace with changing technologies and knowledge. The emergence of the *information society* has reduced the number of jobs in goods-producing activities, has increased the relative importance of higher-skill occupations, and has broadened skill requirements within occupations (Vaughan & Berryman, 1989). Yet the report of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) based on a 1988 test of 100,000 students, found the proportion of 17-year-olds able to perform at the advanced level of reading found in professional and technical work environments (4.8%) was significantly smaller than the proportion who could perform such exercises in 1971 (7%) (Rothman, 1990).

In the 21st century, the United States will need people who can think and solve problems creatively, using technology and information (Hutchins, 1988). Schooling must involve teaching attitudes and abilities that enable students to learn new skills readily in the future (*The Education Deficit*, 1988). These skills include learning through symbols, higher-order cognitive skills (even for jobs that are usually thought of as lower-skill jobs), the ability for self-direction, knowing how to learn, and the ability to work in teams (Vaughan & Berryman, 1989). Students will need the ability to apply what they have learned to problems they have never seen before, to work together with others on projects requiring joint effort, to understand not just *what* is so but *why* it is so, and to demonstrate a capacity for creativity (Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, 1986).

The Cultural Argument for Restructuring

Social Context Factors

The mainstream culture of the United States developed through a long history of immigration marked by the assimilation of English and European ethnic groups. The nation's dominant culture and the cultural foundation of most schools derive their predominant character from a tradition of Anglo-European ethnocentrism. The most prevalent forms of educational curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation in United States schools are based on the assumptions and standards of this dominant culture. For a rapidly growing minority of students, however, the resultant teaching and learning environment conflicts with the basic cultural patterns of their home and neighborhood. The moderating influence of the media notwithstanding, students continue to gain most of their personal identities and norms for behavior from the culture of their family, which, for many, is not of mainstream Anglo-European origin.

A school is affected by the social context of the community it serves and by the distribution of academic skills, social skills, work habits, perceptions, and behavior that its students bring with them into the school. These student behaviors are formed, in part, by the environment that surrounds them. That environment includes norms that define expected behavior, values that determine what is worthwhile, and attitudes that shape responses to people and events. These norms, values, and attitudes are strongly influenced by the child's ethnic and socioeconomic culture during infancy and early childhood -- long before the educational system sees the child (Bird, 1984).

Effects on Learning

The degree of alignment of the norms and values learned at home with those expected by the school has a tremendous impact on a child's educational development from the first day a child enters the school environment. A child whose home and social background have promoted development that meshes with the mainstream expectations encountered at school will enter school prepared to achieve at the level of his or her ability. A child whose home and social background have inhibited his or her development in certain areas or have resulted in development at odds with the mainstream will enter school at a distinct educational disadvantage. The norms communicated to children through the school create subtle and powerful messages that are as much a part of the curriculum as academic content -- messages of belonging to those who share the dominant culture, and messages of difference to those who don't; messages of acceptance to children who have sufficient material resources, and messages of alienation to those who don't.

Educationally or economically disadvantaged children lack the experiences and resources that assure success in most traditional schools. The extent to which the child's development, behavior, values, and family resources are different from the expectations of the school determines the degree to which he or she will be at risk for school problems (Gandara, 1989). Those who speak a language other than standard English or who behave according to expectations at home that are radically different from those at school enter the school culture unprepared to "bridge the social and cultural gap between home and school" (Comer, 1988). Those with under-developed language or social skills enter school unprepared to meet the school's expectations for academic readiness. Those whose families lack basic material and psychological resources enter school without the benefit of advocates in the home -- that is, family members who can reinforce and enhance the school curriculum, who can evaluate the quality of education being offered the child, and who know how to effectively interact with the school system and intercede on behalf of the child (Gandara, 1989).

Cultural Misalignment

Children with the greatest educational needs tend to come from families at the margins of the dominant culture -- minority groups, immigrants, non-English speaking families, and economically disadvantaged populations (Levin, 1987). Researchers have examined the misalignment between these non-mainstream populations and the traditional school culture, with greatest attention to the experiences of minority groups that have often suffered the most traumatic experiences in this society: African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans (Comer, 1988).

Educationally and economically disadvantaged African American students often are "caught between a school system that fails to acknowledge that black students are capable of academic achievement and a black community that considers academic striving as 'acting white'" (Fordham & Ogbu, in Ianni, 1989, p. 681). Those African American parents who are from low socioeconomic backgrounds have come to expect the school to fail their children as other mainstream institutions have failed them. Indeed, traditional schools, "with their hierarchical and authoritarian structure, cannot give underdeveloped or differently developed students the skills and experiences that will enable them to fulfill expectations at the school" (Comer, 1988, p. 46). Struggling students, alienated parents, and defensive school personnel create and perpetuate a relationship of mutual distrust between home and school. The result is that the family and school cannot join in supporting the overall development of the child. Ultimately, the child must choose between participating in non-mainstream groups that provide a "sense of adequacy, belonging and self-affirmation" (p. 46) or rejecting the culture of parents and peer group to pursue academic achievement in the mainstream.

As the dominant language minority population in the United States, the Latino population is comprised of Mexicans, Mexican-Americans, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, and (in smaller numbers) immigrants of other Spanish-speaking heritage. Individual families within these groups are diverse, as well, in their Spanish-speaking ability and dialect, their generational status in the United States, and their socio-economic background. Within the Latino population, those children whose families' language and socio-economic status are at odds with the mainstream culture experience at the outset a double risk in the traditional school culture. Compounding this are cultural incongruities similar to those found between mainstream and Native American cultures. It is clear from the chart below that a number of basic values and beliefs about children and education shared by many adults in the Latino cultures conflict with those held by mainstream educators (Scarcella, 1990).

Mainstream American Teachers'Expectations	Latino Parents' Expectations
Students should participate in classroom activities and discussion.	**Students should be quiet and obedient, observing more than participating.**
Students should be creative, free to respond to requirements in their own ways.	**Students should be shown what to do but allowed to organize the completion of the task creatively.**
Students learn through inquiry.	**Students learn through observation.**
Students should do their own work.	**Students should help one another.**
Critical thinking is important; analytical thinking is important too.	**Factual information is important; fantasy is important too.**
Goals are important.	**People are important.**
Children should state their own opinions, even when they contradict the teacher's.	**Teachers are not to be challenged.**
Students need to ask questions.	**Students should not ask a lot of questions.**

From: *Teaching language minority students in the multicultural classroom* (p. 171) by R. Scarcella, 1990. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc. Copyright 1990 by Prentice Hall, Inc. Reprinted by permission.

In a similar vein, a 1989 report by the U.S. Senate subcommittee on Indian education asserted that the failure of schools to recognize the importance and validity of the Native American community has caused "both the community and its children (to) retaliate by treating the school as an alien institution" (McDonald, 1989). Rachel Misra of the Navajo tribal-education division has suggested that Native Americans' basic distrust of the purposes and pay-offs of education contributes to the exceptionally high and unusually steady rate of attrition. Researchers calculated from a 1987 survey that 90% of Navajo children who enter kindergarten will not complete high school (McDonald, 1989).

A major source of this distrust is found in the well-entrenched cultural insensitivity of the mainstream school culture as experienced by Native Americans. The Native American child experiences direct conflict between many mainstream values in the typical school and the values learned and practiced at home. For example, school methods promote individual competition, personal pride, and assertiveness among students, while many Native American cultures promote *group* competition but *individual* cooperation, personal modesty, and harmony. Dennis McDonald (1989, p. 12) reported: "Today, the strain on Native American children of trying to learn mainstream ways while grappling with the meaning of their heritage remains a central problem in education. And it produces what many now view as a self-perpetuating cycle of low self-esteem and academic difficulties."

Experience has shown that when the culture of the school is not congruent with the culture of those the school serves, students and parents are uncomfortable in the school environment and activities engaged in at school do not mesh with students' perceptions of reality. When the social network and style of the school are incompatible with the culture of the home and neighborhood, parents' alienation from the school is communicated to children, and the perception that the school is the enemy dramatically hinders children's chances to learn (Schorr, 1988). The effect that schooling has on such children goes far beyond negative educational consequences. As Schorr (1988, p. 221) pointed out:

> early school experiences, especially for disadvantaged youngsters, impact powerfully not only on educational outcomes, but, because of the centrality of schooling in children's lives, also on rates of delinquency and early childbearing...School failure and poor reading performance *as early as the third grade*, truancy, poor achievement, and misbehavior in elementary schools, and

> the failure to master school skills throughout schooling are among the most reliable predictors of early childbearing, delinquency, and dropping out of school.

In order to create schools in which disadvantaged students from cultures at the margins of mainstream society feel welcomed and accepted, reform will have to take place in our schools. This reform will have to generate a system that adapts to home and community cultures that differ from the mainstream and that responds to dysfunctional conditions in the community. Some communities are plagued by poverty, violence, drug abuse, racism, and other behaviors and attitudes that are detrimental to human health and achievement. Schools need to recognize the reality of these conditions and their effect on student learning and develop strategies for helping students overcome such conditions. What the educational system can no longer afford to do is ignore either the cultural differences and the environmental conditions that affect student learning.

Educational Reform

Failure of Past Reform

The historical pattern of educational reform has been to address the tangible aspects of change but not the more difficult, behavioral implications of change. Past reforms dealing with the technical core of education, teaching and learning, have been transitory and superficial, while reforms that have expanded, solidified, and entrenched school bureaucracy seem to have had strong, enduring, and concrete effects (Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988). For example, changes initiated within the last century include the open classroom, team teaching, and individualized learning. However, all were either adapted to fit the existing system or quickly discarded. Team teaching and open classroom reforms moved walls between still isolated teachers, and independent study kits and materials for individualized learning were provided while maintaining traditional pupil/teacher ratios and relationships. All three reforms were inhibited by the maintenance of other structures traditional to the educational system.

Educators have resisted reforms that have been too mechanistic a response to the variety of human circumstances that produce learning (Green, 1987). For example, the *excellence reforms* initiated in some states represented an unprecedented, highly directive effort to change the character of curriculum and instruction in the classroom (Kirst, 1987). Such attempts at reform ignored the findings of the implementation literature, the research on teaching, and modern theories of management (Johnson, 1986; Rosenholtz, 1985). Externally imposed practices that are incompatible with local routines, traditions, or resources are likely to be rejected in time (McLaughlin, 1987). Changing schools requires changing *people*, their behaviors and attitudes, as well as system organization and norms.

The Need for a New Organizational Structure

The conclusion drawn by many national commission reports is that, given our demographic, economic, social, and educational circumstances, we can expect neither greater efficiency nor more equity from the current system. United States Secretary of Education Lauro Cavazos has emphasized that change is needed at an elemental, fundamental level -- that "our educational system must be restructured" (Rothman, 1990, p. 1).

A review of recent effective schools research (Duttweiler, 1990; see Appendix A) suggests that effective schools respond to the needs of students in their schools, build programs that will encourage responsibility and learning in their students, and adjust the workings of the school in order to help students function to their capacity. Such schools are not test driven, regulation bound, or focused on control. They strive to meet the needs of all their students and all the needs of their students. Schools that build collegial norms, share authority and leadership, and use the results of teacher evaluation to improve performance are schools that are able to adapt to the changing requirements of staff, students, and the community. It is highly probable, however, that schools which incorporate the above factors are expending a great deal of energy bypassing the bureaucratic constraints built into most systems. It is imperative that the organizational structure within which administrators and teachers function be designed to facilitate rather than constrain teaching and learning.

The kind of change required for successful educational reform is one that alters fundamental elements of school culture -- one that breaks the attachment of school and community members to long-held "values, heroes and heroines, rituals and ceremonies, stories, and key cultural players" (Deal, 1986, p. 120). Efforts to redesign the educational system must proceed from a recognition of the power of organizational norms and an understanding of cultural change concepts. "If we can embrace the variety of roles change can play in organizations, we are much better equipped to understand it. If we understand the process, we are in a better position to improve organizations -- especially public schools. Conceptual pluralism, rather than conceptual warfare or myopia, is a prerequisite to making schools better" (Deal, 1986, p. 123).

In order for schools to be responsive to cultural differences within families and communities they serve, a new approach to state and local control that provides greater discretion to individual schools should be developed. Effective reform cannot be imposed from the top down. The people responsible for the school must be responsible for enacting change. School decision-making and governance patterns need to change so that greater authority resides at the school level, and teachers and parents are included in shaping the school's program through involvement in decision making (Cohen, 1987).

Changing the Culture of Schools

The research on organizational culture sheds light on the problems of changing the schools. Just as other human groupings develop distinct cultures, organizations also develop cultures. Organizational structures are systems of shared expectations, meanings, and values. By definition, organizational culture is a set of common values, beliefs, and norms of behavior shared by members of the organization (Sashkin & Huddle, 1986). An organization's cultural values are reflected in its members' roles and responsibilities, norms for acceptable behavior, and in organizational mission and goals (Harvey & Crandall, 1988), all of which can be observed in the attitudes, behaviors, and communication patterns of the people involved (Purkey & Smith, 1982).

Schein (1985) presented a model of organizational culture that identified the following three levels:

1. **artifacts and creations**, such as technology and visible and audible behavior patterns;

2. **values**, which reside at a greater level of awareness and may be documented in a mission or philosophy statement; and

3. **basic assumptions**, which are taken for granted and are invisible or preconscious.

To go beyond the rhetoric of change and embrace new ways of thinking about schooling, the educational system must engage in "second-order changes" that address the level of basic assumptions in Schein's model. Cuban (1988) described second-order change in the schools as action taken on *design* problems, altering the fundamental ways in which the school organization is put together in order to transform familiar ways of doing things into new ways of solving persistent problems. Second-order change goes to the heart of the school culture and is oriented toward ensuring that the design of the organizational structure supports the needs of its teaching and learning functions. However, second-order change is constrained by barriers created by the cultural patterns of school organization -- by those traditional individual and institutional behaviors that have developed over time and reside at the very level where change needs to take place (Duttweiler & Mutchler, 1990).

The cultural patterns of an organization determine how (or if) the organization adapts to change, what goals are chosen, and the way people interact in order to coordinate their organizational activities (Sashkin & Huddle, 1986). These patterns are inculcated through socialization, "the process by which an employee learns the values, norms, and required behaviors that permit participation as a member of the organization." This process also entails "relinquishing attitudes, values, and behaviors that do not fit" (London, 1985, p. 20). Just as many ideas are systematically socialized out of a culture, other assumptions or beliefs can be eventually institutionalized when "culture-producing" mechanisms in the system disseminate, reward, and perpetuate behaviors based on those assumptions or beliefs.

Changing Paradigms

Paradigms Act as Filters

The need for reform -- for core, second-order change -- in the public educational system is a reflection of sweeping changes in United States society. These societal changes are creating an awareness of a need for fundamental change in the structure of schools and the culture of schooling. These changes are forcing us to examine what we really believe and to evaluate the paradigms that guide our thinking. Understanding the concept of *paradigms* is important because paradigms shape our core assumptions about what is appropriate or inappropriate in our educational system -- how authority should be exercised and how decisions should be made. Paradigms also can blind us to creative solutions to long-standing problems.

The *paradigms* of a society are the lenses through which everything is perceived; they are patterns of basic concepts that form our map of reality. This map guides our perceptions -- it tells us what is real, what may be false, and what to pay attention to; it dictates the methods we use to solve problems. Paradigms are formed through a variety of experiences: the structure of our language, the culture around us, our interactions with others, and what we learn in school. Paradigms encompass a society's fundamental view of the structure of knowledge, its view of how things are ordered, and its view of causality (Schwartz & Ogilvy, 1979).

Paradigms act as screens that filter what enters the mind. The better incoming information fits a paradigm, the easier it is to accept. The less expected or unusual the information, the harder it is to accept. In some cases, when information is so out of synch with the reality shaped by our paradigms, we fail to perceive the information at all. An oft-quoted example is that of the Swiss watch makers. Prior to 1967, Swiss watches were the benchmark standard for the industry. The Swiss watch industry dominated the field before World War II with 90% of the market. Even in the 1970's, their market share was 60%. When offered a new invention that was both highly accurate and inexpensive to produce, however, Swiss watchmakers refused to consider it. The quartz crystal did not look the way internal workings of a watch were supposed to look. The Japanese had no such paradigm and now their watch industry is predominate. By 1982, the Swiss share of the watch market was below 10% (Barker, 1989).

Paradigm Shifts

The influence of paradigms is powerful, all the more so because we are rarely conscious of them because they are implicit -- they tend to surface primarily when they are changing, as they are now. Our old map of reality is no longer consistent with what various scientific and social science disciplines are uncovering. The old paradigms are no longer adequate guides for solving the problems created by changes in the world around us. Such shifts occur infrequently as Schwartz and Ogilvy (1979, p. 5) pointed out:

> ...until the seventeenth century, the Aristotelian model of organic growth provided for Western civilization an internally consistent world view or paradigm. It finally began to crumble under the onslaught of new ideas, beginning with the publication of *On the Revolution of the Celestial Sphere* by Copernicus in 1640. Newton, Bacon, Descartes, Leibnitz, Voltaire, and others carried on into what became known as the "Century of Genius," the Enlightenment, or the Age of Reason.

Paradigm shifts of this magnitude are reflected in an alteration of the shared consciousness of the culture. During the Enlightenment, the existing common understandings of the nature of things were radically altered across the natural sciences and humanities. Ultimately, the new understandings were reflected by changes in the human, social, psychological, religious, political, and economic arenas. "The era shattered and reformulated Western civilization's shared patterns of belief" (Schwartz & Ogilvy, 1979, p. 5).

Evidence from a broad range of human inquiry including physics, mathematics, biology, psychology, and political science suggests that, again, major shifts are occurring in the paradigms of Western society. Schwartz and Ogilvy (1979) identified three common threads in the new paradigms -- a shift from seeking an ultimate truth to exploring multiple perspectives, a shift from linear causality to a model of multiple causation and interdependence, and a shift from hierarchical control to heterarchy. The first, a shift to multiple perspectives, is a move from assuming there is "a universal truth" in a field of knowledge or that rational, objective reasoning can uncover "the right way" to solve a problem, to an understanding that in any human enterprise the collective knowledge is greater than the knowledge of any subset.

The second shift is in our view of causality. Our previous paradigms have included three models of causality (linear/mechanical, probabilistic, and cybernetic) that describe why and how things change in any environment. A fourth model has emerged that incorporates the concepts of positive feedback, multiple causation, and mutual adaptation. This model reveals an interdependence among the various factors within an environment and illustrates how change comes about through a much more complex interaction of these factors. The third shift is in our understanding of order, moving from hierarchical control to a heterarchical sharing of knowledge and influence. The concept of heterarchy in an organizational context involves overlapping and multiple groupings within a whole with changing leadership depending on the task (Schwartz & Ogilvy, 1979).

Dependence on Old Paradigms to Solve New Problems

The effectiveness of educational reform efforts based on the old paradigms has been equated with the effectiveness of rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic. In spite of several waves of reform over the last century, school structure has remained essentially the same since the mid-19th century, with long-term stability existing amid constant change (Deal, 1986; Cuban, 1990). "Classrooms and schools have emerged from innovation, reform, improvement, and school-effectiveness initiatives very much the same as they always were" (Deal, 1986, p. 124). The lack of congruence between the traditional culture of the school and the culture of many of our communities has fostered a set of "impossible problems [that have] accumulated on the shelf," unsolvable by the current paradigms we use to structure our schools (Barker, 1989, p. 23).

Yet, the leader who seeks to stimulate educational innovation will encounter difficulties because people who have learned to function successfully under the old paradigms interpret new information according to those traditional filters. In his book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Thomas Kuhn (1970) pointed out that "the transfer of allegiance from [an old] paradigm to [a new] paradigm is a conversion experience that cannot be forced." He stated that resistance is to be expected from those whose productive careers have committed them to an older tradition. The resistance results from a conviction that the older paradigm will solve all the problems. As an illustration, Barker (1989, pp. 31-32) posed the question, "If you had been developing and applying a paradigm for thirty years and had gained your status and your security because of your ability to solve problems with the old rules, how would you feel if somebody came along who didn't even have experience in the field and said, 'By the way, your entire approach is wrong!'?"

Finn (1990) applied Kuhn's insights to education in the following way:

> In education, too, a deeply ingrained belief structure is involved, complete with all the convictions, assumptions, and

> presumed causal links that practitioners have held dear since their own student days. In this they are joined by more than a few policy makers and a goodly portion of the general public. (p. 590)

Timar (1989) revealed a number of problems encountered by schools involved in trying to change the old paradigms. He pointed out that efforts which leave fundamental bureaucratic structures intact are in danger of failure, yet, efforts that conflict with the image of a "real school" meet with community resistance and lack of support. For example, a Seattle, Washington suburban school, a member of the Coalition for Essential Schools, found that opposition to change is strong when there is a significant departure from the "real school" image. There are strong pressures to do things in traditional ways. The greatest obstacle encountered by Jefferson County (Kentucky) schools has been the inability of each school's faculty to forge a sense of common purpose regarding the goals and substance of restructuring. While these schools have a clear sense that change is needed, three problems -- legacies of the old paradigms -- have emerged: (1) without a shared perspective gained from input from parents and the community, change efforts lack direction and meaning; (2) the schools cannot change in isolation because they are embedded within a system and in a community; and (3) without shared leadership changes cannot command the energy and commitment of those who must implement the decisions.

New Paradigms for Education

Fundamental Beliefs Guide Change

Meaning and commitment are the key to educational change. Efforts to redesign the educational system will fall short of the mark unless the new system is based on fundamental beliefs. To change the paradigms that currently guide the organization of the educational system, beliefs and values must be re-examined and new paradigms articulated. This is not a question of changing beliefs. If paradigms are shifting, then beliefs have already changed. It is the unquestioning acceptance of an organizational structure based on earlier beliefs that has failed to change. These new beliefs, then, must be both articulated and translated into new paradigms to redesign the structure of the educational system.

In order to design a more effective, more responsive educational system, we must challenge our dependence on old paradigms and identify a strategy for weaving new paradigms. A first step in challenging old paradigms is to identify catalysts that will create the critical reaction needed to motivate people to examine their current beliefs and practices and to examine the paradigms from which they work. A new vision of authority and responsibility cannot emerge unless educators are encouraged to question the value of the existing structure and to see how their work could improve if certain conditions were changed. Combs (1988) has suggested that people must have opportunities to do the following:

- confront ideas, problems, beliefs, values, goals, objectives, and possible alternatives;
- discover and explore new ways of seeing and thinking in interaction with others; and
- experiment, make mistakes, modify positions, and try again, preferably with others of like mind.

Identifying and applying our basic beliefs to educational policy and practice might provide that which Drucker (1973) recommended -- a mechanism to identify and discard objectives, programs, or activities that are obsolete or unproductive. A concise set of belief statements can provide both a frame for evaluating the current organizational structure and a starting point for building a more effective, more culturally sensitive structure.

Adopting New Paradigms

Because the existing educational model is so familiar -- seeking ultimate truth, assuming linear causality, and structured for control-oriented hierarchy -- it is difficult to conceive of new models. The structures that determine what goes on in schools and how it is accomplished are rarely the result of deliberate design but more often evolve from habit, tradition, or political pressure (Sergiovanni, 1987). People-oriented institutions change slowly as a result of the evolving beliefs and values of individual persons. The challenge is to use the new paradigms as guides to changing the educational system. The paradox is that, unexamined, old paradigms persist even after changes in belief and values have occurred.

The survival of the public school system may depend, however, on identifying those paradigms that no longer allow us to solve existing problems and on adopting new paradigms that allow for new solutions. As it is currently structured, the educational system lacks resilience to adapt to societal changes. Biological resilience "results from a combination of adequate diversity, mutually supportive relationships, and open subsystems that are capable of sudden evolutions to new regimes" (Schwartz & Ogilvy, 1979, p. 31). The public school system, like a biological system, will either cross the threshold to extinction or evolve to a new state. If public education is to survive into the 21st century, there must be corresponding shifts in the paradigms that guide the organization of the educational system -- a shift to multiple perspectives, interdependence, and shared leadership.

The new paradigms can then be used to implement a vision that reflects the fundamental beliefs of the learning community about the purpose of education, how the educational system should work, and how people should be treated within the system. Identifying the belief and value system of the community culture and reshaping the schools to conform to it will go a long way toward solving some of the problems that have been so resistant to earlier reform efforts. The implications of these shifts for the educational system are suggested in the following discussions.

A Shift From "One Truth" to "Multiple Perspectives"

The shift from ultimate truth to shared perspectives is a change from a belief that anything, if properly understood, can be divided into parts whose behavior and nature will determine the behavior of the whole, to a belief that the whole transcends its components. The root of the change is a shift from a belief that there is "one, ultimate truth" to a recognition that there are many kinds of knowledge to be explored by a multiplicity of approaches -- that each form of knowledge or perspective has a contribution to make toward understanding and wisdom (Schwartz & Ogilvy, 1979).

In any controversy, for example, antagonists base their views on different assumptions, methods, criteria, values, and data. Each person considers his or her view to be based on "objective facts," and fails to see that opposing views are also based on "objective facts." Each person "sees" a different situation, believes different methods are required to illuminate the situation, and reaches different conclusions.

Each view is equally complex and usually "right" from the perspective of the person who holds it (Schwartz & Ogilvy, 1979).

The first step out of the dilemma caused by this failure to recognize the perceptual nature of such debate is to acknowledge that each perspective provides only a partial and hence ambiguous view of the situation. *Perspective* connotes a view at a distance from a particular focus such that our location affects what we see. This means that any one point of observation gives only a partial view of the whole. According to Schwartz and Ogilvy (1979), before successful resolution of a problem can begin, antagonists in any controversy must accept the genuineness and uniqueness of multiple perspectives. Such acceptance may, in turn, lead to the development of a vision that incorporates these various perspectives.

The Importance of Vision. Changing the educational system requires the recognition of multiple perspectives present in the learning community. When the various perspectives present in a community are harmonized, a shared vision of the purpose of education can be forged. The importance of vision is a recurring theme in studies of educational effectiveness. Excellence in any field is unattainable unless individuals have the will, the desire, and the vision to achieve great things. A vision is a "target that beckons" (Bennis & Nanus, 1985, p. 89). Vision "defines not what we are but rather what we *seek to be or do*" (Colton, 1985, p. 33). The term *vision* implies that some form of reflective soul-searching has taken place and that ineffective practices have been measured against some ideal outcome.

Visionary Leadership. The effective schools literature has, from the first, emphasized the importance of visionary leadership. A comprehensive understanding of the school and a clear vision of how the school should operate characterizes effective principals (Manasse, 1985). A synthesis of the literature on visionary leadership by Grady and LeSourd (cited in Chance, 1989) identified five dominant qualities of a leader with vision. Leaders with vision:

- are guided and motivated by personal values,
- have an intense commitment to the achievement of goals which they have identified as important for the organization,
- strive to develop a common sense of purpose and direction among all members of their organization,

- are innovators, and
- consistently project and attest to a future that represents something better.

Having vision alone is not sufficient for effective leadership, however. A leader must be able to move from thinking in terms of traditional paradigms to conceptualizing the organization from perspectives offered by new paradigms. As Barker (1989, p. 29) illustrates, the paradigm shifter recognizes that, "These aren't the right rules for solving these problems!" and then boldly searches for a different set of rules -- new paradigms -- that *will* solve them. Those who adopt new paradigms do so because of frustration with the inability of the old paradigms to solve new problems and they are willing to take risks. According to Barker (1989, pp. 36-37), visionary leaders:

> leap across a professional chasm that separates the old paradigm, where territory is well illuminated and where their reputations and positions are clearly defined, into a new territory, illuminated by the new paradigm in such a limited way that it is impossible to have any idea whether or not they are standing on the edge of an unexplored continent or merely a tiny island.

Vision and Commitment. A major function of visionary leadership involves gaining the commitment of others to that vision and then ensuring the vision shapes policies, plans, and day-to-day activities in the organization (Caldwell and Spinks, 1988). The early effective schools literature defined a leader as one who transforms the organization according to her or his vision of where it should be moving (Sashkin, 1987). The literature described a leader that clarifies his or her own vision through some rational process (Chance, 1989) and then, presumably, presents this vision like an Athena born full-grown and armored from the head of Zeus. Murphy (1988) pointed out the fallacy of this heroic metaphor. He asserted that only a handful of individuals possess such extraordinary vision; that such expectations devalue ordinary competence and view hierarchical leadership as the only important ingredient in organizational success. He suggested the following:

> ...notions of heroism misconstrue the character of organizational leadership in many situations. Problems are typically so complex and so ambiguous that to define and resolve them

> requires the knowledge and participation of more than a visionary leader....Top administrators tend to point out a general direction rather than a specific destination; they are more likely to provide a scaffolding for collaboration than a blueprint for action....During this process, organizational vision is often discovered, since vision setters, like policy makers, are frequently dispersed throughout an organization. (pp. 655-656)

Creating a feeling of ownership for the vision within the members of the organization is a recurring theme in both the educational and business literature (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; MacPhail-Wilson & Guth, 1983; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Roueche & Baker, 1986; Russell, Mazzarella, White, & Maurer, 1985; Tichy & Ulrich, 1984). Successful organizations are guided by a vision that has grown from the needs of the entire organization and that is claimed by all important actors (Bennis & Nanus, 1985). In this same vein, more recent research on effective schools has emphasized the collaborative nature of vision-building (see Appendix A). When the vision belongs to one dynamic leader, is communicated in persuasive ways to others in the organization, and is supported by administrative fiat, that vision will last only as long as that leader lasts. If the vision is the result of the collective wisdom of the members of the organization and is developed through a painful searching for common values, beliefs, and purposes, then it will survive and flourish.

Sergiovanni (1990) suggested that the development of such an organizational vision is a part of "value-added leadership." Value-added leadership is that extra quality of leadership which makes the difference between ordinary and extraordinary performance. Value-added leadership requires a "performance investment" from administrators and other staff. Performance investment is induced by opportunities to experience deep satisfaction with one's work. Value-added leadership builds a shared covenant -- a vision -- comprised of the purposes and beliefs that bond people together. The covenant is a compact that provides the system with both a sense of direction and an opportunity to find meaning in school life.

Basing such a covenant on multiple perspectives is a way of assuring broad-based commitment to the vision as the fundamental guiding force for change. Dufour and Eaker (1987) suggested that the ultimate value of a vision of educational excellence will depend on whether it elicits feelings of ownership and endorsement from the various groups that must be involved in its implementation. The task of the leader is to create a bond between people through a *common* vision rather than to link people and events through management design (Blase, 1987).

A Shift To Multiple Causality and Interdependence

The shift to a paradigm of multiple causality recognizes the multiple linkages between and the interdependence of the various factors within the environment. Our image of causality has to do with questions of why things happen the way they do. Three models of causality have been part of our old paradigm. The oldest model, that of linear/mechanical causality, focuses on singular causes. Push a rock and it moves; turn one gear and it will turn another, attached gear. A second model is that of probability/prediction. If you flip a coin, the chances are 50/50 it will come up heads. Those solving problems using the old paradigm view order as the local, temporary result of a probability distribution (Schwartz & Ogilvy, 1979).

The third model is based on cybernetics. Cybernetic models provide for feedback from effects to causes such as when the thermostat turns the furnace on or off depending on sensed conditions in order to maintain a stable environment. The focus in the cybernetic model is on negative feedback. Cybernetics provides the basis for a fourth model that has emerged, that of interdependence. This model incorporates three concepts: *positive feedback, multiple causation, and mutual adaptation.* Positive feedback allows favorable conditions to promote growth and change. Multiple causation exists when there are numerous factors impinging on an organism (or organization) at any one time. Mutual adaptation results when a change in one part of the environment affects all other parts (Schwartz & Ogilvy, 1979). The multiple causality and interdependence model is especially applicable when viewing complex organizations such as the educational system.

The Interdependence of School Culture and Community Culture. When attempting to design an educational system that responds to changes in the fabric of our society, decision makers need to view schooling as part of an interdependent system, affected by multiple outside influences. This requires an understanding of how the school culture interacts with home and community cultures and how that interaction affects student learning. The relationship between schools and society has been the subject of considerable inquiry (Apple and Weis, 1986; Gandara, 1989; Hall, 1989; Ianni, 1989). Schools are viewed both as products of a society and the process by which a society maintains itself.

While schools are thought of, ideally, as places whose mission is to "seek only to maximize the achievement of individual students" (Apple & Weis, 1986), realistically they function as a part of the economic, political, and cultural spheres of the society. Schools serve to prepare students to be part of a local and national labor force. Schools reinforce the society's socio-political groups, its institutions, and its social and cultural ideologies. Finally, schools produce the knowledge necessary to maintain and further develop all aspects of our society -- a function that includes defining certain knowledge as legitimate and other knowledge as inappropriate or unnecessary. In performing these functions, schools reflect and perpetuate the society's dominant culture.

The traditional paradigm for solving problems of this magnitude in education has been to pinpoint a single cause and directly apply a single solution. From this perspective, a commonly applied solution for a low level of achievement among high school graduates has been to increase graduation requirements. Some say that this reform strategy not only fails to solve the problem but may actually increase dropout rates among those who have the lowest levels of achievement (Schorr, 1988). A new perspective on the system and its participants as being affected by multiple, interrelated factors reveals the inadequacy of such a linear approach. Problems in the school have multiple causes, and it is only through the consideration of all factors and the participation of all members of the learning community -- teachers, parents, community members, students, administrators, school board members -- that viable solutions can be found.

First, schools must take the culture of the home and community into consideration in order to provide an environment in which children can make full use of educational opportunities. Each school must adapt to its unique community culture in order to avoid the "conflict and confusion [that] are inevitable when such social institutions as the home, the school, and the workplace present different standards" (Ianni, 1989, p. 675). Each school must capitalize on the cultural diversity of its students, its community, and mainstream society. This cannot be a superficial accommodation but rather a delving into the "culturally pluralistic perspectives of the human experience" and an examination of the "interdependent, interactive, and complementary" natures of our society's social, ethnic, gender, and national groups (Gay, 1990, p. 58).

The implicit or hidden cultural messages imparted by the school, as well as those messages which are obvious, must be examined and evaluated in order to ensure positive interactions within the school and between the school, the home, and the community. Schools must examine the ideologies present in three areas of school life (Apple & Weis, 1986):

1. the hidden curriculum -- the school culture must recognize the norms and values being implicitly taught in the daily routines and expectations of school and deal with the conflicts that arise between this ideology and those norms and values that students bring from their community culture;

2. the knowledge being directly taught -- educators and community members must deal with the critical questions of what is legitimate school knowledge (i.e., what knowledge is currently taught? whose knowledge is it? what knowledge should be taught and why?)

3. the teaching models, traditions, and strategies used -- educators must recognize the connection between teaching methodology and effect on students, and select and create teaching technologies that most appropriately meet the demands of the knowledge to be learned and the needs of each student as learner.

Second, the parts played by the home and community must be examined along with that of the school. Children learn by internalizing the attitudes, values, and ways of behaving of those who are important to them. In recognizing the interdependence of school culture and diverse home and community cultures, it becomes evident that the home and community cultures must help create the educational conditions for growth and change. Families and communities must recognize that the values and goals of the school reflect the norms of the mainstream culture through which their children must be able to economically and socially navigate. "In today's world it is virtually impossible for any society or the members of any culture or group to 'go it alone'" (Hall, 1989).

Families and communities must also recognize that they can work with the school to help their children "achieve academic excellence without jeopardizing their [children's] personal identities or cultural integrity" (Gay, 1990, p. 58). Schorr (1988, p. 150) observed that "many

Americans find it hard to believe that intervention from outside could be effective in helping families raise children who have self-esteem, feel valued, and are convinced that their actions matter." Extensive experience has shown, however, that not only is the school environment powerfully influenced by what goes on in students' homes, but also the school can do much to help parents make out-of-school influences more supportive of learning.

During the process of examining school, home, and community cultural norms and values, *mutual* adaptation must take place so that the school and community are sending messages to students that are reinforcing rather than working at cross purposes (Ianni, 1989). The crucial link in building a system based on multiple causality and interdependence is that school, home, and community cultures are responsive to this need for mutual adaptation in order to create conditions that foster student learning. The conditions will vary from school to school and district to district, but any successful process for determining those conditions will include an understanding of cultural interdependence and the validity of differing cultural perspectives.

The educational system must be the change agent in this endeavor. According to Comer (cited in Schorr, 1988, p. 232), schools are "the final common pathway in our society and are more accessible to systematic change than the family." Thus, it is incumbent on the schools to develop a culture that works with the home and community and that recognizes the numerous factors involved in solving problems in the educational system.

A Shift From Control-Oriented Hierarchy to Heterarchy or Shared Leadership

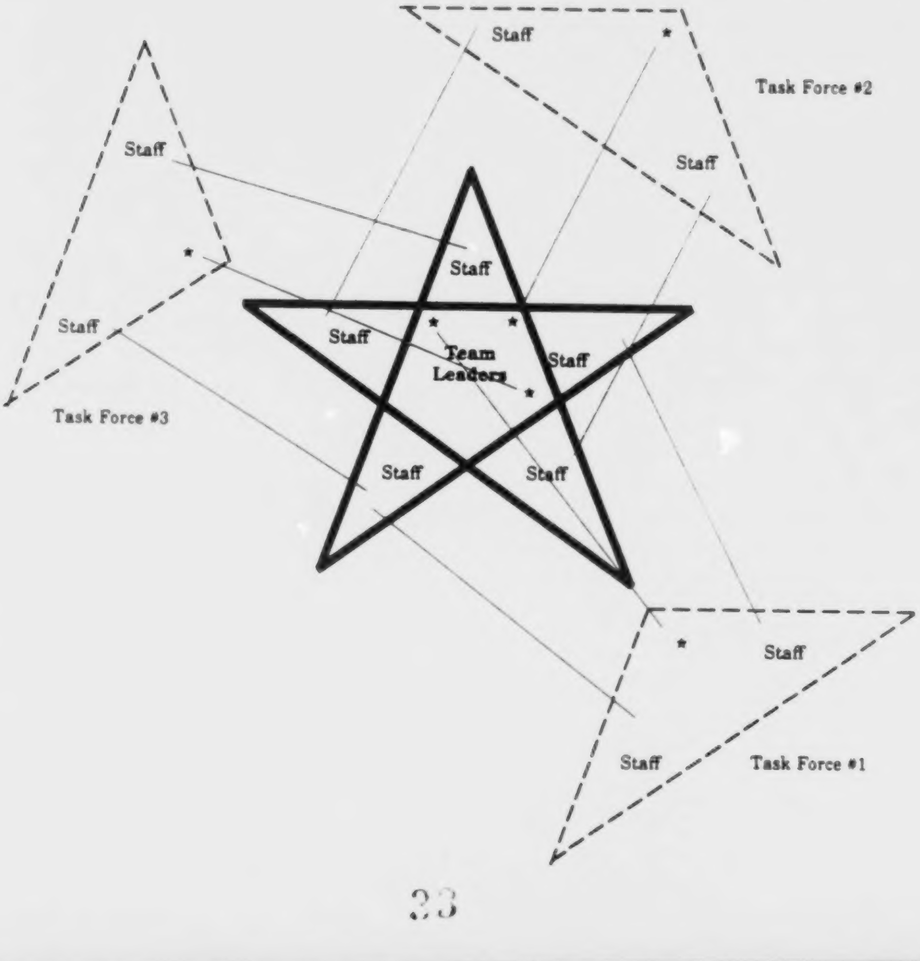
Our paradigms define our understanding of *order* -- of how things are structured, of relationships between parts, and of the processes of change. The old paradigms provided an understanding of order based on control-oriented hierarchy where selected information is passed from the top of the hierarchy to the bottom. In most organizations, hierarchy has been the structural rule, the pyramid the metaphor (Schwartz & Ogilvy, 1979).

The new model of heterarchy has been generated from findings in such areas as holography, DNA research, brain theory, and predicting river-delta flow (see Schwartz & Ogilvy, 1979, for an in-depth discussion).

Heterarchical organization can be viewed as a decentralization of the concept of structure. In the new model, information about the entire order is contained in each location within the order. This provides an interconnectedness in which change in any one aspect of the organization will result in a network of changes as other parts adapt to the new conditions.

Heterarchy provides for overlapping domains and multiple peaks of leadership and produces outcomes that transcend the sum of an organization's parts (Schwartz & Ogilvy, 1979). The star might be an appropriate metaphor for this type of organization. If you view the star as being made up of triangles that intersect with each other at different points, the concept of heterarchy becomes clearer (see Figure 1). It is something like a picture puzzle for children in the Sunday comic pages that asks, "How many triangles can you find in the star?" Each triangle represents a natural working subgroup of the whole.

Figure 1: The Star Metaphor for Heterarchical Organizational Structure



At different times, different subgroupings occur within the heterarchical structure depending on the task to be accomplished. Each of these ad hoc subgroupings will have a different leader, again depending on the task. Individual staff are involved in those tasks that require their particular skill and expertise. They contribute their knowledge as members of different subgroupings depending on the demands of the task. This form of organization can provide the flexibility needed by the educational system to adapt more rapidly to cultural changes.

Heterarchy in the Educational System. Most successful businesses have discovered that control-oriented management produces outcomes that subvert the interests of both the organization and the people who work in it. Since change must occur at the most local level of operation, effective leadership in either a business organization or a school requires the recognition that nothing will change unless the people in that organization "buy into it." Well-run, successful companies do not create systems of control to compensate for the weaknesses of their personnel or to overcome personnel limitations. Rather, successful companies develop management styles and characteristics aimed at empowering people (Levine, 1986).

There are a number of aspects of the traditional control-oriented structure of the educational system that produce dysfunctional consequences. When districts are organized on a hierarchical, control-oriented model, poorly conceived policies and their implementation impede effectiveness when staff members are forced to develop strategies to circumvent the bureaucracy (Pfeifer, 1986). When organizational authority becomes imbedded in a set of rules, rules take on an aura of compulsion, discourage creative efforts, justify minimal performance, and produce apathy. In addition, rules become substitutes for personal judgment and become sacrosanct (Anderson, 1969). Centralized control-structures often limit the effectiveness of good administrators, but what is worse, have a tendency to produce administrators who subscribe to those bureaucratic values and procedures that actually reduce the effectiveness of staff (Seeley, 1985). Traditional managers who maintain control over all activities decrease the responsibility felt by subordinates for the success or failure of any effort (Barth, 1987).

Elmore (1983) suggested that a policy and management approach focused on fostering professional problem-solving capacity within an organization is necessary for effective delivery of services. He pointed out that:

> *when it becomes necessary to rely mainly on hierarchical control, regulation, and compliance to achieve results, the game is essentially lost.* Moving from delegated control to hierarchical control means moving from reliance on existing capacity, ingenuity, and judgement ... to reliance on rules, surveillance, and enforcement procedures. Regulation increases complexity and invites subversion; it diverts attention from accomplishing the task to understanding and manipulating rules. (Elmore, 1983, p. 358).

Many businesses have adopted a new shared leadership paradigm that incorporates autonomous or self-managed work units within the organization. The rationale for self-managed units is based on the belief that the work group is the most effective entity for allocating resources and delegating tasks to deal with unique work conditions. In a self-managing unit, the members have the responsibility not only for executing the task, but also for defining how the task will be structured and controlling the resources needed to accomplish it. In addition, the self-managing unit has the authority for monitoring and supervising their own performance (Duttweiler, 1988).

For such a concept to be applied effectively in the educational system, certain conditions need to be in place. There needs to be clear and meaningful direction to meet the goals and standards established for the school by external policy makers. There needs to be adequate resources controlled by the school. There needs to be an enabling school structure that creates "internal work motivation." The educational system must develop a collaborative and collegial professional partnership in the leadership of schools (Maryland Commission on School-Based Administration, 1987). The internal leader -- the principal -- should be firmly committed to participatory management.

As Little and Bird (1984) pointed out, schools that prove successful, even under difficult circumstances, have certain characteristics, habits, and perspectives that make up the culture of the school. The staffs of these schools exhibit norms of collegiality and norms of continuous improvement. These norms are part of the school's culture. In addition, staff members must understand that they are responsible for regulating their own behavior, that they are obligated to continuously assess the situation and to actively plan how they will proceed with the work of the school based on those assessments (Duttweiler, 1988).

Once the idea is accepted that the primary source of expertise for improving schools is internal, then many ways to organize for leadership are possible (Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, 1986). Educational leadership should be thought of as a process of influencing others to commit their energies and efforts to accomplish organizational goals and improvement objectives. People who solve problems build a sense of commitment to and concern for the organization. If people have invested in decisions, they have a stake in seeing solutions work; conversely, uninvolved people may have a stake in seeing solutions fail. Participatory management patterns -- talking to, listening to, and involving people -- not only tap the resources of personnel to solve specific problems, but engage their willing cooperation and commitment (ASCD, 1985).

Conclusion

Societal changes encountered by the United States in the past three decades have created an awareness of the need for fundamental change in the structure of schools and the culture of schooling. The public educational system is confronted with a myriad of problems -- low student achievement, student dropouts, teenage pregnancy, drug use, violence, and alienation from the mainstream culture -- that appear impervious to our usual solutions. One source of this perturbing condition is the lack of congruence between the traditional culture of the school and the culture of many of our neighborhoods, towns, and cities. Children with the greatest educational needs tend to come from families *at the margins* of the mainstream culture (low SES, ethnic minority).

In order to create schools in which disadvantaged students from non-mainstream cultures feel welcomed and accepted, structural change will have to take place in our schools. Such change requires alteration of the beliefs, values, and rules of the educational system. Most reform initiatives have caused the school culture to respond but not change fundamental beliefs, values, or rules. Instead, schools have engaged in a frenzied "ceremony of changing" when those outside the organization exerted pressure for changes that insiders either have no intention or no hope of realizing.

To go beyond a ceremony of changing and embrace new ways of thinking about schooling, the educational system must engage in second-order change -- that is, in actions on *design* problems, altering the fundamental ways in which the school organization is put together in order to transform familiar ways of doing things into new ways of solving persistent problems. This is true cultural reform oriented toward ensuring that the design of the organizational structure supports the needs of its teaching and learning functions.

The need to redesign our system requires acceptance of a new set of paradigms. Paradigms encompass a society's fundamental view of the structure of knowledge, its view of causality, and its view of how things are ordered. Paradigms shape our core assumptions about what is appropriate or inappropriate in our educational system -- how authority should be exercised and how decisions should be made. The three problems cited previously (p. 17) as legacies of the old paradigms (without a shared perspective gained from input from parents and the community, change efforts lack direction and meaning; the schools cannot change in isolation because they are embedded within a system and in a community; and without shared leadership, changes cannot command the commitment of those who must implement the decisions) will continue to frustrate reform efforts so long as the old paradigms guide public education. If public education is to survive into the 21st century, new paradigms must shape the organization of the educational system -- the paradigms of multiple perspectives, interdependence, and heterarchical organization.

SECTION TWO: THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Steps to Organizing for Excellence

Steps to Organizing for Excellence is a workbook developed to provide districts and schools with a systematic process for reviewing and/or redesigning the organizational structure of their system to meet the changing needs of their learning community. The workbook is based on SEDL's collaborative work with Partners groups in three states (Louisiana, New Mexico, and Texas) over a two-year period on the experiences of districts across the nation engaged in restructuring, on the research on effective organizations, and on the results of an SEDL survey of practitioners who have been involved in such change efforts. It is revised as new experiences provide new insights on the process. It offers a powerful tool for harnessing the power of belief and creating a vision that is shared throughout the learning community.

Prologue: Weaving A New Paradigm -- A Strategy for Using A New Decision-Making Paradigm

A strategy for using a new paradigm for decision making is proposed at the beginning of the workbook. It uses the collective wisdom of members of the community to make decisions concerning major issues. The process outlined below shifts the paradigm from rational, objective planning by a few experts to shared-perspective consensus by all involved; from control-oriented management to heterarchy -- to a wider spread of leadership, commitment, and responsibility; and from the assumption that problems can be "solved" and solutions can be imposed to the realization that interdependency and mutual causality require system flexibility.

The strategy provides the following when used to address major issues:

1. involvement of all the constituencies in the learning community, especially those who have been traditionally left out;

2. a mechanism that ensures multi-directional communication; and

3. broad-based commitment that survives the tenure of individual participants.

The decision-making stages in this strategy provide a method that can be used when major change in the system is being contemplated. It is an effective way to involve the entire community in defining fundamental beliefs and system outcomes. The process begins with *School Level Teams* formed from representatives of the various constituency groups in the school -- administrators, certified staff, other staff, parents, business/community members, and students. Teams from each school meet together with other School Level Teams to receive training and information concerning an issue.

The School Level Teams break into *District Role-Alike Groups* for discussion of the issue and to select representatives to the *District Council*. (In larger school districts, an alternate strategy might be used in order to keep the number of role-alike group members to a reasonable number -- no more than 15. A large district might form feeder-school or area Councils.) The District Council discusses the issue and, through consensus, makes recommendations. The recommendations are taken to the District Role-Alike Groups for clarification and then to the School Level Teams. Any revisions or suggestions for the District Council are routed from the School Level Teams back through the District Role-Alike Groups to the District Council. This process continues until consensus is reached on the issue. *Consensus* means that everyone involved agrees that the solution is one they can support.

This is a time-consuming and frustrating process. It is a process reserved for decisions that require community support. What it assures is a broad-based commitment to system change that will survive the people involved in its development. In particular, when used to develop a set of belief statements for the district, it ensures tight-coupling based on shared beliefs and values.

Overview of Steps for Organizing for Excellence: The Workbook

There is no short-cut to effective change. Those who have been through the experience have learned the hard way -- if you fail to get broad-based community support, if you fail to develop a clear definition of the new structure and its roles and responsibilities, if you fail to provide adequate time or in-depth training, and if you fail to change the system as a whole -- you either end up going back to cover the missed steps or you find your system hasn't really changed at all.

The workbook that follows provides space to develop action plans for the implementation of each step outlined as follows.

STEP 1: Form Decision-Making Teams to Plan District Change

Whether or not the strategy presented above is used, the logistics of forming decision-making teams must be clarified. The establishment of such teams provides a mechanism for involving various groups in the decision-making process and is in keeping with the findings of recent effective schools research and with the recommendations of national commissions. Step 1 suggests four questions that should be addressed:

1. What types of decision-making teams will you need?
2. What constituent groups will be represented?
3. How will the members be chosen?
4. What decision-making authority will the teams have?

STEP 2: Develop Skills for Working Effectively in Groups

Step 2 recommends developing group process skills. The experience of districts involved in a variety of restructuring efforts suggests there is a critical need for developing, at the very beginning of any change effort, staff skills for working effectively in groups. A recent survey asked educational practitioners who were involved in some form of restructuring to identify the major difficulties they encountered or observed in trying to change traditional behaviors when initiating such change efforts (Duttweiler & Mutchler, 1990).

One of the barriers identified by the practitioners was the need to develop human resources at the school and district levels. The practitioners indicated there was a critical lack of decision making, group process, and collaborative skills. Respondents asserted that site participants require skills to move from "individual thinking to collective thinking," and faculties need to be able to move from "isolated working and decision-making patterns to group decision making." A lack of experience in consensus decision making, in particular, was mentioned. Decision making by consensus demands skills very different from those required in authoritarian decision making or decision making by vote.

STEP 3: Develop Statements of Belief to Guide Policy and Practice

Step 3 recognizes the need for districts to clarify the purposes and goals of education and to develop a system compatible with community culture and belief. The workbook Prologue provides a decision-making strategy that will ensure widespread community support for the educational system and for whatever Statements of Belief emerge.

Peter Drucker (1973) admonished long ago that it is not enough to do something right; it is important to do the right thing. Yet, despite all of education's evaluation systems, methods, instruments, and techniques devoted to measuring how well something is being done, little effort has gone into determining whether the thing in question should be done at all (Cook, 1988). How can schools, districts, or states know whether a thing is the right thing, or whether it should be done at all, if they have not first redefined their values and their beliefs? It is values and beliefs that determine which goals are the right goals -- which goals are the ones that should be pursued.

The set of beliefs -- developed through an inclusive, consensus process -- focuses the commitment and energy of the community toward the development of a redesigned system based on the beliefs. The beliefs provide a guide for developing new policies and practices and for evaluating what is being done in the district. The Statements of Belief developed within the district become the unifying, motivating force for making changes to ensure that everything from rules and regulations to classroom practice is consistent with what the learning community has identified as its fundamental beliefs.

STEP 4: Develop an Ideal Vision for Your District

A number of practitioners who responded to the SEDL survey stated that their districts lacked a clearly defined, shared vision of an educational system -- a vision that encompasses both desired learning outcomes for students and a redefinition of teaching and administration for faculties and principals. Step 4 provides an opportunity to develop this vision of the system. It is a logical place to involve as many people as possible (by using the new decision-making paradigm in the Prologue, for example) in defining what the system would look like if the Statements of Belief guided policy and practice. The focus should be on identifying the ideal, on describing a system that, if realized, would represent a tremendous improvement in student achievement, community involvement, teacher commitment, and school effectiveness.

STEP 5: Develop District Outcomes Based on Statements of Belief

Step 5 prompts consideration of another important issue: what are the outcomes expected from the system being designed? What are students expected to do as a result of having attended district schools? What is expected of teachers, administrators, and central office personnel? Step 5 also invites the development of ways to assess those outcomes and consideration of how successful achievement will be rewarded and how failure to achieve the outcomes will be corrected.

STEP 6: Develop a Decision-Making Framework to Enable Schools to Meet District Outcomes

Step 6 leads to defining the appropriate level at which various decisions should be made. People must be provided with clear definitions of a concept or strategy and its operational implications in order to engage in successful implementation. More than one-third of the practitioners who responded to the SEDL survey mentioned above asserted that certain aspects of the change effort lacked definition or clarity in their district. One respondent stated that his/her district had the following difficulty:

> ...in clarifying the legitimate options for site-based decision making. Under the shared governance plan that had been in the district for many years, the appropriate areas of decision making had never been made clear. This past year we spent considerable time identifying site-based decision making options that were legitimate if schools chose to exercise one or more of them.

Many of the SEDL survey respondents reported a lack of clear definition of the concept of shared decision making, and indicated there needs to be a common language and set of understandings about concepts and processes and their implications in the day-to-day "normal way of conducting school business."

STEP 7: Resource Allocation

Step 7 suggests that the resources needed for schools to make the decisions delineated in Step 6 should be under the control of the school in order for the school to achieve the outcomes for which they are responsible.

STEP 8: Define New Roles and Responsibilities at the District and School Levels

Any changes in the authority, decision-making, and resource allocation structure of the district will require changes in functions or behaviors of the various actors and may require new skills. Step 8 provides the opportunity to consider how the new roles of personnel at each level will be redefined. Practitioners who responded to the SEDL survey reported that people experienced difficulty defining the new roles, responsibilities, and relationships required. One suggested that this may remain a challenge over time since successful change efforts require a "constant clarification of each role and the individual responsibilities that accompany decentralization."

STEP 9: Individual Schools Develop a Plan to Achieve District Outcomes

At this point, each school should look at the special needs of its students, parents, and community and consider how it can best achieve district outcomes. For a variety of reasons, schools may need to consider different modes of scheduling the school day, week, or year. Different schools may require a different configuration of staff. Each school will need to develop plans for parent and community involvement, for staff development, for using technology, and for developing curriculum and instruction best suited to its students' needs.

STEP 10: Train for New Roles at the District and School Levels

Step 10 offers an opportunity to consider who needs to be trained, how time will be provided for training, and what kinds of training will be offered. One respondent to the SEDL survey, echoing the sentiments of many others, pointed out the difficulty inherent in pursuing any type of far-reaching change in the educational system, where "training for change [must be accomplished] while maintaining the operation of schools and the school system." As another respondent observed, "this concept is a major shift from general practice and many expect the shift to happen overnight, or after two or three training sessions, failing to recognize that change is a process, not an event."

STEP 11: Schools and District Identify Needed Policy Changes

Step 11 requires a look at the policies, rules, regulations, procedures, and practices that are currently in place. This should be identified from the perspective at the individual school level and at the district level. The step asks (a) What district or state mandates/regulations are compatible with achieving district outcomes? (b) What district or state mandates/regulations are in conflict with achieving district outcomes? and (c) What policies, rules, regulations, procedures, or practices need to be changed in order to achieve district outcomes?

For example, districts need to seriously appraise the way time is currently structured for both teachers and students. Respondents to the SEDL survey described a variety of distinct needs for time that are difficult to meet in the typical school day: time to scan and collect ideas regarding "new ways of doing things," time for training in new skills, time for decision-making bodies to meet, and time to "play out the group dynamic" that is necessary to ensure that sound consensus decision making takes place.

This is the point at which the district attempts to reconcile the emerging vision with state mandates and regulations. It is a time to identify those mandates and regulations from which the district might want to request a waiver. The need for hierarchical commitment beyond the district was voiced by still another respondent:

> "Perhaps my biggest frustration has been the lack of support from state educational officials. The move towards shared governance also means an increase in flexibility from state rules

and regulations. We have experienced a bureaucratic mind-game which has often slowed us down."

STEP 12: Monitor Commitment

Step 12 provides eight questions that measure district commitment to the change:

1. Are the Statements of Belief guiding district policy and practice?
2. Does the district provide the schools with a supportive organizational context?
3. Is the communications network open, clear, and multi-directional?
4. Is the district organized for school-based management and shared decision making?
5. Is systematic staff development available?
6. Does the district delegate to the schools appropriate control over resources?
7. Does the district provide schools sufficient resources to achieve district outcomes?
8. Are district outcomes being achieved?

The step also provides eight questions for measuring school commitment to the change:

1. Are the Statements of Belief guiding school policy and practice?
2. Does the school provide a climate that supports student learning?
3. Is the communications network open, clear, and multi-directional?

4. Is the school organized for school-based management and shared decision making?

5. Is systematic staff development available?

6. Is there broad decision-making participation in the distribution of resources within the school?

7. Do the teachers have sufficient resources to fulfill their responsibilities?

8. Is the school achieving district outcomes?

A number of practitioners responding to the SEDL survey stated that their change effort lacked hierarchical support in the form of broad and permanent commitment to the processes of shared decision making and school-based management. As one respondent reported:

> We had neither institution-wide preparation nor commitment to a change in decision making/management structures (much less a change specifically in the direction of shared decision making) prior to instituting our pilot 'experiment' ... there is no generalized commitment conceptually to the efficacy of the shared decision-making concepts and underlying assumptions.

A number of practitioners highlighted the need for full support from all "high level" district shareholders: central office staff, the superintendent, and the school board. One practitioner who responded to the SEDL survey described a consequence of inadequate long-term, system-wide commitment as follows: "it is difficult to keep school management councils moving and motivated if the members do not perceive support and sharing from central."

Selected Examples of the New Paradigm in Action and Steps from the Workbook

Using the New Decision-Making Paradigm

The decision-making paradigm proposed in the *Steps for Organizing for Excellence* workbook prologue evolved, in part, from an experience designed and facilitated by the Texas/SEDL "Organizing for Excellence" Partners.[1] A series of Partnership meetings in Fall of 1989 resulted in planning a workshop to be conducted by key members of the Partnership. The workshop was designed to elicit from practitioners the "real world" implications and outcomes of basing educational policy and practice on a set of Statements of Belief.

Individual Partners nominated districts for participation based on the superintendents' interest in educational restructuring and commitment to district-wide reform. Using additional geographic and demographic criteria to ensure the best possible representation of Texas' diverse learning communities, eight school districts (Allen, Austin, LaJoya, Olton, Pampa, Socorro, Spring Branch, and Tyler) were selected to participate (see Appendix C for location and demographic profiles of the districts).

The decision-making paradigm was used at the SEDL-sponsored workshop, "Organizing the Educational System for Excellence: The Power of Belief," held in Austin, Texas, on January 18-20, 1990. Each district brought a vertical team consisting of the following: superintendent, a school board member, a representative of the business community, an elementary principal and teacher, a secondary principal and teacher, a parent, and a high school student (see Appendix C for participant list).

Workshop participants first gained a common knowledge base regarding restructuring in practice through presentations by and interaction with members of a district team from Santa Fe, New

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[1] The Texas/SEDL "Organizing for Excellence" Partners were formed as a result of an SEDL-sponsored conference during August of 1988. Over a period of two years, the Partnership developed the Statements of Belief, gained endorsement for those belief statements, and hosted a conference in which vertical teams from eight Texas school districts participated. The examples of the new paradigm in action and illustrations for Steps 3, 4, and 8 are drawn from the work of the Partnership and from the conference.

Mexico. Role-alike groups, facilitated by members of the Texas/SEDL Partnership, then met to discuss and come to consensus on the implications and consequences of the Statements of Belief for their role in the learning community. Finally, participants returned to their district teams to share and integrate the thinking produced in their role-alike discussions. Facilitated by their own superintendent, each vertical team developed a district-specific set of implications and possible outcomes of basing educational policy and practice on the Statements of Belief in their community.

The following are examples of the type of deliberations that might evolve from using the decision-making paradigm and the steps in the workbook to develop a set of Statements of Belief (Step 3), to develop a vision for a district (Step 4), and to define new roles and relationships in a restructuring district (Step 8).

STEP 3: Develop Statements of Belief to Guide Policy and Practice

This step was carried out, not by a district team, but rather by a state team. A group of Texas educators, working from the assumption that the current organization of the educational system cannot meet the demands of a changed and changing society, formed a group known as the Texas/SEDL "Organizing for Excellence" Partners in November 1988. The effort, sponsored by SEDL, was an outgrowth of an SEDL project that focused on the organizational factors that promote effective teaching and administration.

The Partners felt strongly that it was important to re-examine the basic assumptions -- the core beliefs -- that shape the educational system. As a result, at the initial planning meeting they decided to begin their effort by defining a set of basic principles or beliefs that could provide a foundation for any restructuring effort. Through a review of the literature by SEDL staff, various sets of assumptions, principles, and values were identified that underlie some of the current approaches to restructuring and improving schools. Appendix A contains a sample of these statements as well as a brief synthesis of effective school characteristics derived from recent research.

Based on the literature review, a number of "basic beliefs" were delineated. Partners were asked to judge and revise each belief according to the criterion, "Can this belief be applied at all levels (school, district, state); to all involved (students, teachers, administrators, parents, school board members, etc.); and in all areas (curriculum, instruction, staff development, budgeting, discipline management, scheduling, etc.)?" The Partnership met in April 1989 to consider the reactions and first-cut revisions of the belief statements compiled by SEDL from Partner responses.

A Beliefs Subcommittee was charged with continuing the revision process to produce and recommend a set of belief statements for consideration by the Partnership. During a two-day retreat in Pampa, Texas in June 1989, the Beliefs Subcommittee hammered out a set of ten Statements of Belief. After additional Partner input and revision, the full Partnership adopted a final set of statements that express fundamental beliefs about the responsibilities of individuals, the obligations of schools, and the goals of the system (see Appendix B for list of those Partners involved in developing and revising the Statements of Belief). While the members of the Partnership represent a variety of educational associations and agencies, their support of the statements was an expression of their personal beliefs. As a collective, the Partnership believed that the Statements of Belief could provide both a frame for evaluating the current organizational structure of the educational system and a starting point for building a new structure.

By March 1990, the following organizations and associations had endorsed the Statements of Belief: the Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA), the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB), the Texas Association of Secondary School Principals (TASSP), the Texas Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (TASCD), the Texas Classroom Teachers Association (TCTA), the Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TEPSA), the Texas Federation of Teachers (TFT), the Texas LEAD Center, and the Texas State Teachers Association (TSTA).

The Statements of Belief follow.

Statements of Belief

The statements of belief advocated in this document are intended to serve as a foundation for efforts to restructure the educational system in Texas. Restructuring is not adding more of the same or even making significant improvements to the existing structure. Restructuring requires that the current system be redesigned to meet the demands of a changed society.

Every individual in Texas has a vested interest in the success of schooling. To ensure that success, we must build a system based on vision and moral purpose. Our intent is to promote a restructuring of the educational system into a learning community that supports, affirms, and reflects in its every operation the following fundamental beliefs.

1. **Every person has equal value and worth.**

   The educational system must be designed to affirm the dignity and worth of all who participate in it. Though an individual's behavior will affect the degree to which he or she is held in esteem by others, the basic humanity shared by all must be acknowledged and respected. This must be the basis for all educational decision making in a highly heterogeneous society.

   The value placed on education for all in the U.S. must be matched with a commitment to value each person's language and ethnic identity. Students must be assured that their ethnic and cultural heritage is viewed as equal to any other. Parents/guardians must be assured that their thoughts and feelings are given equal consideration regardless of their ethnic, educational, or socioeconomic background. Teachers, other staff, and administrators at all levels of the system must be assured that their contributions to the educational process are of equal value to those of all others. Full and enthusiastic participation in the educational system is stimulated through an active and ongoing affirmation of the inherent worth of each individual.

2. **Every person can learn and realize success.**

   The system must be prepared to deal with students at the levels of knowledge, skills, and attitudes with which they enter the system. The schooling experience must be structured so that every student can move from where he or she "is at" to where they need to be to experience success in learning and in life.

   The inclusion of "every person" in this belief statement promotes the idea that learning is an ongoing process for adults as well as children. Each individual can continue to learn and attain greater success. The system must be prepared to provide parents/guardians with opportunities to understand the purpose of schooling and to contribute to their children's success. The system must provide teachers, other staff, and administrators with the professional growth opportunities they need to succeed in their work with students.

3. **Together, the family, the school, and the community control the conditions for success.**

   The success of learning, teaching, school administration, and family welfare is an interdependent endeavor. It requires the coordinated efforts of the separate forces of family, school, and community. Together, the family, the school, and the community must forge a "learning community" that unites spheres of responsibility, areas of interest, resources, and common goals to create conditions for success. The weaving of these three forces into such a "learning community" will invalidate all excuses for failure. There must be a recognition that much of our learning occurs outside of the school, and that both the family and the community provide valuable learning resources.

4. **Schools must develop knowledge, skills, thinking processes, and attitudes for successful living today and for tomorrow's world.**

   Schools promote the development of the whole person in the present and in the future. The educational system must be designed to provide students with the basic knowledge required to function in a technological society; with the ability to analyze problems, to access information, and to develop alternatives; and with the understanding that learning is a continuing process.

Schools must deal with the cognitive and the affective, the vocational and the avocational, the realities and the possibilities.

Learning is a lifelong process; therefore, students must be prepared to learn throughout life. In addition, the definition of "student" must be expanded to include people of any age with a desire to learn. The educational system must provide parents/guardians with an appreciation of the need for continued learning and for analytical thinking. It must provide teachers, other staff, and administrators with the opportunity to acquire new knowledge and to develop new skills and attitudes required in a changing world so that they can better address the needs of students.

5. **In a democratic society, schools must ensure the opportunities necessary for all individuals to reach their potential.**

A democracy requires the full participation of its citizenry. Full participation depends on all individuals achieving their full potential to contribute to the economy and culture of the nation. Webster's Dictionary defines "potential" as "something that can develop or become actual." This means that each individual has an array of possibilities limited only by innate physical or genetic factors. Schools must ensure conditions that encourage these possibilities to develop to their fullest.

We can no longer afford a system that meets the needs of only a certain percentage of our students. The educational system must be structured so that students from all ethnic groups, from all socioeconomic levels, and those with special needs are ensured the opportunity to reach their potential. While individual acceptance of those opportunities is necessary, the realization of full potential is contingent on the educational system developing within the individual the skills and attitudes that enable learning.

In addition, all parents/guardians should have the opportunity to participate as part of the learning community. They should have a chance to learn what they need to know to reach their own potential as well as to help their children. Teachers, other staff, and administrators should have staff development opportunities to grow and develop.

6. **Schools must enable individuals to assume responsibility for their own behavior and performance.**

   The educational system must be redesigned from a system focused on external control to one that encourages individuals to develop a sense of responsibility for their own behavior and performance. To "enable" is to provide the means or the opportunity that makes something possible. Therefore, skills and knowledge necessary to assume responsibility must be identified and learned. Responsibility must be both given and accepted. Barriers to responsibility must be recognized and overcome, and mutual support for all individuals must be provided.

7. **Schools that honor courtesy, mutual respect, obligation, and shared commitment provide the best conditions for success.**

   People will contribute when they are confident that their contributions and they, themselves, are welcomed and respected. The educational system must foster an atmosphere in which courtesy and respect are observed in all interactions between people; where everyone feels free to express their ideas; where everyone accepts responsibility for the success of the whole; and where everyone works together toward common goals.

8. **Collaboration and cooperation are essential for arriving at the best decisions and for implementing successful solutions.**

   The educational system must be redesigned so that every level provides opportunities for all who will be involved in carrying out decisions to have input into the decision-making process. The best decision emerges from a consideration of the viable options. Collaboration -- the joining together -- of all those who are concerned about an issue produces the quality of information needed to gain insight into the possibilities; cooperation -- working together for mutual benefit -- generates the "best" answers from which to choose. Similarly, the most successful implementation of a solution depends on the committed, concerted efforts of all those concerned.

9. **Individuals and schools must have sufficient authority to make decisions for which they are held accountable.**

   Accountability is an essential ingredient at all levels of the educational system. Staff at each level of the system should be held accountable for those areas for which they are responsible, but accountability should be coupled with sufficient control over the conditions for success. Therefore, along with accountability must go the authority necessary to make decisions and carry them out effectively. Shared decision making at all levels of the system allows participants to invest in the decision. The sense of "ownership" this represents, in turn, generates a commitment to the successful implementation of the decision. To then be held accountable for the outcome is a natural and expected consequence. To be held accountable otherwise is unreasonable and counterproductive.

10. **Successful schools require a climate that encourages creativity and innovation.**

   In a world where change is rapid and information grows in geometric proportions, the educational system must encourage creativity and innovation. While care must be taken to avoid jumping onto each new and untested bandwagon, there also must be an acceptance of the risks involved in trying new ideas and new ways of doing things. Within the "learning community," people at all levels must recognize that fear of failure will effectively stifle both creativity and innovation.

STEP 4: Develop an Ideal Vision for Your District

Using the Statements of Belief as a guide for educational policy and practice, each vertical team from the eight Texas districts developed a vision for their entire learning community. In presenting a report of their deliberations to the full workshop audience, each district team first offered a vision statement or key implication they believe to be central to an educational system that is guided by beliefs.

An educational system based on and guided by the Statements of Belief will create an environment in which:

> "all students are enabled to achieve their potential" (Allen ISD);

> "education is a shared responsibility" (Austin ISD);
>
> "student needs and desired outcomes will guide school structure, curriculum, and practice" (LaJoya ISD);
>
> "learning is a moral issue" (Olton ISD);
>
> "school accountability for student outcomes is supported through the provision of the kind and quantity of time needed for collaboration and cooperation" (Pampa ISD);
>
> "communication between all levels of the local school system [ensures that the ultimate outcome is] an improved society with student performance and values as the anchor" (Socorro IDS);
>
> "school structure reflects diverse, local needs and perspectives" (Spring Branch ISD); and
>
> "beliefs create the foundation - a blueprint for the future - for school policy and practice" (Tyler ISD).

District teams then presented their perspective on what would be happening in a restructuring district at the classroom, school, district, and community levels. Issues of accountability, student learning, distribution of authority, resource allocation, and relationships with others, and skills were addressed within these four areas. A synthesis of the team perspectives follows.

CLASSROOM

Accountability and Student Learning. The Texas district teams described student learning at the classroom level in terms of broad academic and personal outcomes. For example, one team stated that the student outcomes of an educational system based on the Statements of Belief are "high self-esteem, high achievement, and success for all."

Another team said that students will see the connection between school subjects and life experiences. In addition to mastering basic skills, they will be able to use extended (or higher level) thinking skills such as group process skills, problem solving, and communication. Students will be self-directed, active learners who demonstrate increased motivation, higher self-esteem as learners, and respect for others' opinions.

A third team presented the following specific "desired student exit behaviors" for their district:

- proficiency in two languages
- positive self-esteem as a learner and a person
- fully developed cognition at individual ability level
- ability to effectively use process skills (e.g., problem solving, communication, decision making)
- self-directedness as a learner
- concern for others
- knowledge and skill with computer technology
- physical well-being

Accountability at the classroom level will be shared by teachers and students. Teaching and learning will take place via a more individualized approach, with each student benefiting from an individual academic plan and an annual conference (the latter of which is rare beyond the elementary years). Students will gain a greater sense of responsibility for their own learning, enjoying greater choice in the curriculum and finding rewards for risk taking.

Teachers will have greater accountability for improved creative instruction. Teaching strategies will be marked by an increase in cooperative learning that produces not only more active individual learners but also a class commitment to each student's success. The primary instructional grouping strategy thus will be to create effective cooperative learning groups of students, and student tracking or pullout will be minimized.

Measures of student and school performance will be diverse, including test scores, attendance rates, student level of self-esteem, number of college bound students, drop-out rates, and rate of teacher turnover. Methods of measurement will include a high degree of student and teacher self-evaluation of performance. Schools will reflect a more positive learning environment with fewer rules for behavior needed.

Distribution of Authority. Texas teams viewed the classroom as a democratic learning environment in which student input and decision making are central to the teaching and learning process. The distribution of authority in a restructuring educational system will change the norm of student/teacher relationships to one in which the teacher is a facilitator who shares leadership and "followship" (one dedicated to a cause) with students.

The classroom will be a professional workplace in which teachers serve as guides, coaches, and facilitators of student learning. Teachers will exercise power in making educational decisions regarding such key elements as curriculum, time, and resources.

Students will share authority with professional staff in the selection of teachers as position openings arise. They will also be part of a collaborative process used to establish rules for behavior and plan instructional programs. Student input in refining the grading system will be solicited.

Resource Allocation. Resource allocations will support commitment to the new classroom interaction described above. Sufficient time, staff development, and student skills development will be provided to ensure its success. The necessary time will be provided both for collaboration and planning among teachers and for collaboration between teachers and students.

Relationships with Others and New Skills. Relationships in the classroom will be characterized by greater respect and trust between youths and adults. Collaborative group action via consensus decision making will be common.

Students will take on a truly participatory role in their education. They will be resources as well as recipients and contribute to creating relevant education for all students. For example, they will participate with trained and screened community people in providing a variety of mentoring relationships for other students (e.g., buddies, tutors, counselors).

New skills will be evident in the classroom, with students and teachers alike gaining and using organizational skills and critical thinking skills. A shared inquiry into group dynamics will allow young people and adults to develop the facilitation and communication skills necessary for effective teaming in the classroom. Skills critical to both followship and leadership will enable all class members to accept responsibility and accountability for the teaching and learning process.

SCHOOL

Accountability and Student Learning. School level accountability primarily will be to create a school climate that supports a successful teaching and learning environment in the classroom. The school will present a warm, positive atmosphere that promotes a high level of student self-esteem and an equally high level of student pride in achievement.

School outcomes will include not only higher student outcomes as measured by standardized test scores but also such improvements as increased community participation in the schools, a refined curriculum, higher self-esteem of school team members, decreased vandalism, increased student graduation rates, and better attendance on the part of both students and teachers.

Distribution of Authority. Most of the Texas teams specifically described a shared decision-making body at the school level that serves as a vehicle through which "decisions are made by all concerned." One team stated that each school will have a governing council that involves staff. Another team included "representation from all student groups" on its proposed building level governing councils. A third team asserted that "a council composed of teachers, parents, students, staff, and community representatives and coordinated by the principal will be responsible for the governance of the school."

Teachers will be members of teaching groups or teams empowered with the authority to make decisions relevant to providing quality instruction for students. Teaching teams will be held accountable for results. One district team described the principal as the school cultural leader, that is, a visionary who serves as a catalyst and facilitator for school action. Another stated that "administrators are coaches who create a safe place where people take risks."

Resource Allocation. The major resource discussed by Texas teams was time. One Texas team asserted that the traditional structure of time in the school day and week is insufficient to meet the needs for individualized help for students much less a multitude of critical non-instructional activities. Another team proposed that "a restructuring of time during the day and week will open up the student schedule to allow extra time for enrichment and relearning and provide early release at noon every Friday for teacher planning and collaboration."

One team offered examples of key elementary teacher activities outside of direct student instruction that require additional or flexible time: individual teacher planning, parent meetings and training, instructional team meetings, and planning for school and classroom improvement. Secondary school staff need additional or flexible time in order to accomplish a number of activities rarely undertaken at the secondary level, such as proactive parent conferencing, teacher-student conferencing, cooperative planning (e.g., incorporating critical thinking into curricula, developing interdisciplinary units), "switching" teaching roles, and observing colleagues.

The ultimate impact of restructuring time in the schools will be instructional benefits. At-risk students will be able to work on their specific needs and all students will benefit from enrichment when they successfully meet academic expectations. Teachers will benefit from participating in departmental work sessions to address "real" issues (e.g., curricular scope and sequence, instructional strategies) that directly affect student learning. The entire school will benefit from staff working together to alter the student schedule from the traditional use of time to one that is student and teacher driven, that is, one that responds to the needs of learning and teaching.

Relationships with Others and New Skills. The Texas teams envisioned school staff as evolving into a cooperative, collaborative building team, with parents and the business community supporting school programs and involved in meaningful ways. In order for such relationships to develop, a number of new skills will be required. One team stated that the Statements of Belief themselves point to specific skills and strategies needed by school-level decision makers and the entire learning community. For example, strategies are needed for:

1. helping all students to learn and realize success;

2. incorporating problem-solving skills, thinking processes, and attitudes for successful living into the instructional program;

3. collaborating and cooperating in order to arrive at the best decisions affecting students;

4. generating ideas to help the school to treat all members with mutual respect; and

5. building a shared commitment to provide the best conditions for student and school success.

DISTRICT

Accountability and Student Learning. The district will be accountable for supporting and protecting a student-centered educational system. District-level decisions will be consonant with the Statements of Belief and will consider all implications for students. As one Texas team stated, the bottom line in all educational decisions will be "what's best for kids." This team also asserted that all district decisions should occur within the four boundaries of the following "decision screen":

1. What do you want? (identify desired student exit behaviors)
2. What do you know? (consider research, data, and prior experiences)
3. What do you believe? (examine your belief system and philosophical base)
4. What do you do? (determine decisions, actions, and policies)

Another team stated that the district is accountable for altering key elements of the local educational system (and the *state* is accountable for *supporting* local restructuring) in response to the district's answers to four key questions:

1. "What do the data say? Who are our kids? "
2. "What are our current school improvement efforts? What persistent problem is restructuring intended to solve?"
3. "Who is in the best position to determine educational problems and possible solutions? Who is responsible?"
4. "What are the results? Who benefits from the solution of the problems?"

District focus on supporting and protecting student learning will result in two major outcomes: (1) students will be better engaged in their own learning, and (2) teachers and other professionals (as those who directly guide student learning) will be better engaged in their own work. One district team stated that the district will support student learning by ensuring student access to materials, opportunities, and resources they need to successfully acquire desired exit behaviors.

Another team said that central office will support school initiatives by providing them with flexibility in curriculum, instruction, and staffing. For example, this team suggested there will be a change in philosophy regarding appropriate curriculum sequences that may erase the traditional divisions between elementary, middle or junior high, and senior high school. Similarly, the school board will support school and central office initiatives by making necessary changes in local policy and requesting appropriate waivers from the state to adapt mandates, rules, and regulations to the schools' and district's needs and to help streamline the local process.

Central office staff will also serve as "guardians of the vision" by initiating and maintaining strong communication networks between and among managers in the district. Central office will take primary responsibility for providing information and feedback to the community -- particularly regarding the intent and importance of structural changes to ensuring student success in the system. Publicity and other communication avenues will also be used by the school board and central office to build community commitment to the district belief system, the empowerment of teachers, and the implementation of site-based educational plans.

Distribution of Authority. The Texas teams asserted that "those in the local learning community - the people closest to the kids - are best able to identify and implement appropriate solutions" to problems that prevent the community's children from achieving desired learning outcomes. One team stated that individual schools will have the authority necessary to provide a variety of instructional settings to meet the needs of their student population. Another team stated that the district budget will be collaboratively determined. One team suggested that opportunities to apply for grant money will be made directly available to students and teachers rather than reserved for district or principal action.

One team recommended a state-wide restructuring of the educational system to provide districts with authority over decision-making areas that are currently under state authority or require case by case decentralization by the state via waiver requests. Specific recommendations for increased district authority included:

1. flexibility in the use of time (which encompasses issues of time per subject; daily, weekly, and yearly time schedules; and grade promotion and retention);

2. the development of a teacher appraisal system that reflects personal and local assessment by including self-appraisal, coaching, student input, and parent input (rather than a standardized system such as the Texas Teachers Appraisal System);

3. the creation of flexible and diverse local curricula within a broad State curriculum (rather than a highly specific, centralized curriculum for each grade level); and

4. the acceptance of multiple, appropriate criteria in hiring personnel for "market lean" teaching positions (rather than adherence to certification criteria for such instructional specializations as bilingual and special education teaching).

Resource Allocation. The Texas teams described district allocation of four kinds of resources central to school functioning: information, time, money, and staff. Resource allocation will be programs-based, that is, district attention will focus on providing to schools those resources necessary to ensure individual school programs can meet district outcomes. The School Board and central office will provide such key resources as research information, data, and time flexibility as well as sufficient and appropriate financial support to each school. The district will demonstrate commitment to appropriate staffing for each school. Sufficient time and funds also will be committed to the development and support of the teams required for district level vertical-team decision making.

One Texas team specifically addressed district allocation of time. Its report described a way to restructure existing school time to provide non-instructional time in the professional workday for school personnel. Four days of the school week will be lengthened so as to dismiss school for teachers and staff at 12:30 pm one day per week. The academic year will be lengthened to contain six additional early release days and a sufficient number of full inservice days. The district will provide funds and district-wide coordination of student activities on weekly early release afternoons to free staff for the array of professional activities described under School Resource Allocation above.

In addition, the district will ensure that time is allocated to supporting parental involvement, effective communication between schools and with central office, collaboration within the district, and problem solving and creative idea generation. Finally, time will be devoted to ensuring a district-wide, shared understanding of the Statements of Belief so they can become institutionalized in daily school-level and district-level decision making.

Relationships with Others and Skills. The Texas teams discussed communication, commitment, and broad-based participation in decision making as key elements of the district's relationship with other levels in the educational system. One team said that all available communication channels must be used to develop and maintain the shared understanding and commitment to values that contribute to student success. Examples of the diverse communication channels available include the school board, school improvement teams, the superintendent's advisory committees, and principals' building-level teams and advisory groups.

Another team stated that the district will seek and obtain the involvement of the full learning community in all aspects of the district planning process, beginning with a district needs assessment. The perspectives of all stakeholders - students, teachers, principals, and citizens - will be solicited and included in recommendations to the school board. The board's central role will be that of observer, sensitive listener, and trust builder as plans based on the needs assessment are developed. Ultimately, people will support what they have a part in creating.

COMMUNITY

Accountability and Student Learning. Parents and the community will be accountable for increasing their participation in the schools, taking greater ownership in school activities, and sharing responsibility for outcomes. Increased involvement in the schools will be evident in ways beyond the usual donation of time and money for special occasions. For example, one district team stated that parent and community involvement in the pre-K to 12 years will include collaboration with the school in providing educational activities outside the school walls, throughout the community. Another team stated that business and community involvement beyond the pre-K to 12 years will include helping to conduct follow-up studies of graduates, providing training programs and jobs to graduates, and obtaining scholarships for advanced education. Parents and the community will actively demonstrate pride in their schools and students and will hold high expectations for both. They will support diversity among the district's schools. One district team stated that such diversity among schools will enable parents to exercise choice for their children.

Texas teams also stated that the community's involvement in the school through increased parent and business participation will lead to benefits for the entire community. Improved learning outcomes for students will provide businesses with better educated personnel, neighborhoods with a decrease in crime and gang-related activities and, ultimately, the community with an improved economy and higher socio-economic level.

Distribution of Authority. As described above, the Texas teams envisioned parents and the business community supporting school programs and involved in meaningful ways. Most of the teams specifically described a shared decision-making body at each school that includes parents and community representatives who collaborate with the principal and teachers to initiate and support curricula, instructional strategies, and special programs appropriate for the school's student population.

Resource Allocation. The Texas teams stated that the community will contribute essential resources to students and the schools. One team suggested these contributions would range from tangible financial support and publicity, to the more intangible resources of spending quality time with children and providing enduring, positive support to the schools.

The team that delved into the issue of restructuring time provided numerous examples of the relatively untapped resources available in the community. The team said that the community will play a unique role in ensuring that the restructuring of time in their district is effective and yields the desired outcomes. The community will help provide the facilities and expertise needed for staff development and revenue support for the extended school year. Community members will staff many of the student learning activities offered on the weekly early release afternoon (from 12:30 to 4:00 pm). This time will be an optional but very important "special instruction time" for students.

Businesses, municipalities, arts groups, and civic groups will offer activities such as seminars, demonstrations, and field trips. Other enrichment activities, such as music and dance lessons and sports, can be scheduled. Similarly, individualized help can be provided to at-risk children, and community specialists (e.g., drug counselors) might work with groups of students. Working parents can select the best activity schedule for their children and still maintain a regular schedule, while families with a parent working at home can schedule special activities or appointments for these afternoons or enjoy more family time.

Relationships with Others and Skills. One Texas team stated that parents and the community will participate in learning and teaching skills critical to a student-centered educational system. They will gain facilitation skills, communication skills, and listening skills as they participate in the schools. Individual schools will cooperate in this endeavor by providing training for volunteers. Schools will also provide a space in the building for parents and community participants to enable them to effectively work with children, staff, and each other.

Parents will actively help their children gain responsibility, self-discipline, restraint, and high morals at home. Education will be an explicit priority at home, and children will receive positive reinforcement for success from all adults in their lives.

STEP 8: Define New Roles and Responsibilities at District and School Levels

The following reports by role-alike groups represent the collective thinking of 72 Texas educators and community members on the changes in roles and responsibilities that will take place in a district that is restructuring based on a set of Statements of Belief.

Role of Business and Community

The Business/Community members identified "broad participation from business in each community in a formalized partnership with school districts at all levels" as an overall implication of using the Statements of Belief as guiding principles.

They identified three major behaviors for Business and the Community if the Statements of Belief were to guide policy and practice in their districts. The behaviors were as follows:

1. Collaborative involvement in revenue source decisions at all levels

2. Advocacy and networking for collaborative educational goals

3. Personal participation in the schools at all levels

When asked to describe what would take place in the learning community if Business/Community members were to practice the three behaviors, they offered the following:

- The business community would be involved in deciding how best to use available funding for students. Members of the business community would exhibit a willingness to meet regularly with the board on funding needs. Members of the business community would assume their share of responsibility for making decisions regarding curriculum direction and district-wide goals for achievement. They would establish a consortium mechanism to work with districts.

- In their advocacy role, members of the business community would be involved in the recruitment of companies and business people to assist the schools, in the successful attainment of community support, and in exercising leverage with elective officials.

- Business and community members would individually act as mentors for at-risk children; provide student with rewards, awards, and incentives; serve as different role models in the schools; and contribute to career awareness efforts (K-8).

- The business community members viewed the authority for fiscal decisions as shared among the administration (central and building), parents, teachers, students, and school board members. The authority for advocacy and networking between the business community and the district should be shared with other community members through the establishment of corporate teams. The schools would have the authority to supervise volunteer mentors.

When asked what knowledge, skills, and abilities would be needed to carry out their role, members of the business community listed the following:

- knowledge and awareness of curriculum and instructional needs
- technical skills in fiscal planning and resource allocation
- knowledge of funding sources
- collaborative skills
- negotiating
- advocacy
- communication

Role of Elementary School Administrators

The elementary principals identified four major behaviors for their role if the Statements of Belief were used as a guide for educational policy and practice. The most important behaviors for elementary school principals were to lead, to enable, to facilitate, and to empower.

This group identified the following areas for which they would be held accountable:

- community involvement and support
- encouraging the teacher generation of ideas
- clear vision and goals
- increased student achievement
- developing and maintaining a positive, nurturing, and orderly environment
- ensuring that all groups (teachers, students, parents, business leaders) have an opportunity to be heard
- employee satisfaction
- student and parent satisfaction

The knowledge, skills, and abilities they considered important included:

- negotiation
- mediation
- consensus building
- knowledge in field
- communication
- data analysis
- ability to delegate

- time management

The elementary principals believed that in this process: (1) authority should be shared; (2) the state and district should provide objectives but implementation options should be determined by campus needs; (3) the new role of the central office would be to provide support and resources for campus efforts; (4) resource allocation should be flexible and site-based for time, staff, materials, and money; and (5) there should be deregulation of textbook selection.

In the area of student learning, the group agreed it could accept minimum standards from the state, but these should be supplemented with student outcomes and alternate measurements of performance determined with site-based participation.

Role of Elementary Teachers

The elementary teachers identified three behaviors that were important to their role as implied by the Statements of Belief: communicating, expecting, and developing.

- Teachers should have the responsibility for communicating with families, with the community, and within the school. Communicating means open listening as well as speaking one's own ideas. Teachers need the authority to initiate ideas and to solve problems. Teachers should be role models for students.

- Teachers should maintain high expectations for all participants in the educational process. This means high expectations for students and parents. Teachers should communicate their high expectations for parental interest and encourage parents to have high expectations for their children.

- Teachers should be responsible for developing as professionals and as decision makers. As professionals, they must be willing to take the time this requires, but they must also expect the system to provide time. As decision makers, teachers want a "seat at the table" where decisions are made.

Role of Secondary School Administrators

The secondary school administrators identified their first major responsibility as working to create a nurturing environment that fosters success for all. Success would include improved self-esteem, graduation rates, and attendance. The achievement of this goal might be measured by climate surveys, self-esteem surveys, and increased participation in all school activities.

Administrators would need the following knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- communication
- listening
- group dynamics
- risk-taking
- sensitivity
- data collection and interpretation
- conferencing
- ability to separate the "sin from the sinner"

The second major responsibility identified by the secondary administrators was to create an environment in which all affected groups share responsibility in the decision-making process. This would encourage the following:

- ownership by all groups
- development of problem-solving techniques
- decisions by consensus
- pride and commitment
- evaluation of decisions

The knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for accomplishing this responsibility were identified as follows:

- consensus building
- delegating
- team building
- developing a "thick hide"

The third major responsibility identified by the secondary school administrators was to ensure that teaching for learning takes place. The administrators felt their role would be akin to a "high priesthood."

The results of this would be seen in an emphasis in the school on cognitive skills, higher test scores, fewer failures, all students learning at higher levels, and monitoring of post-graduates.

In response to the question concerning what knowledge, skills, or abilities they would need to carry out this responsibility, the secondary school administrators emphasized that they need (1) effectiveness in designing tests, (2) knowledge of a variety of instructional strategies, (3) willingness to take risks, and (4) the ability to modify conditions for different populations.

Role of Secondary Teachers

Secondary teachers emphasized that if the Statements of Belief were used to guide practice their responsibilities would include determining the allocation of their professional time in and outside the school day. This would achieve the following outcomes:

- time for professional growth
- curriculum that prepared students for the future
- equal voice for individual teachers in scheduling time
- increased interaction with colleagues, students, and community members
- improved creative and innovative instruction for student success
- collaboration
- equal partnership
- teachers will become more professional

Student learning would be the priority in teachers' use of professional time. Students would have opportunities for individual conferences with teachers. Students would see connections being made between different subjects they are studying. With innovative approaches, more students would experience mastery. Students would become active rather than passive learners in the educational process.

The secondary teachers suggested that measures of accountability might include the following: 1) a teacher's log-in sheet to document use of time, and 2) records of students' success after graduation.

Teachers would need both time-management skills and team-building skills to carry out this responsibility effectively.

The second major area of responsibility identified by the secondary teachers was that teachers would design creative curricula based on current and future student needs. Teachers would be involved in scheduling and curriculum decisions. The district would provide support for an innovative curriculum in which student learning is a priority. Curriculum would be client-based and provide an enriched educational experience promoting lifetime learning.

The expected outcomes from this responsibility would be increased student motivation, a client-based curriculum, and increased student learning.

The teachers identified the following knowledge, skills, and abilities as important for successfully carrying out this responsibility:

- interdisciplinary strategies
- communication with businesses and universities
- writing skills
- diagnostic skills
- listening skills

The third major responsibility identified by secondary teachers would be to participate equally in the design and administration of the building and district budget as a means of ensuring the success of restructuring. The goals of such involvement are increased collaboration, improved quality of teaching and student learning, and expanded teacher ownership and responsibility. Teachers should participate as partners in the allocation of resources. The effectiveness of such involvement could be measured by a decrease in teacher turnover and student dropout rates, and a corresponding increase in teacher and student attendance.

In order to effectively participate in such decisions, teachers would need the following knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- knowledge of school finance
- knowledge of school law
- knowledge of accounting
- consensus decision making

As a result of these expanded teacher responsibilities, the teachers anticipated such outcomes for students as the following:

- equitable support for student participation in extra-curricular activities (academic as well as athletic and artistic)
- increased student access to materials, opportunities, and resources for maximum educational benefit
- improved quality of instruction due to professional growth opportunities and staffing

Role of High School Students

The high school students discussed the student role in a system organized to reflect the Statements of Belief. They identified, first, students' responsibility for developing shared personal values. If this were to happen, they suggested we would see:

- stereotypes being broken
- students having a real role in developing the shared personal values
- a discipline system that is supported by parents, encouraged by teachers, but the ultimate responsibility of the student
- positive "encounter groups"
- service projects that would help the less fortunate
- a free exchange of ideas based on critical thinking

The second responsibility students identified as important was motivating and encouraging other students. If this were to occur, we would see:

- the breakdown of elitist attitudes
- higher self-esteem
- higher grades, test scores, and graduation rates
- lower dropout rates
- outside appearances would not be a determining factor in how students are judged
- peer counseling programs and student support groups
- student tutoring
- student mentor programs and big-brother, big-sister programs

The third behavior important to students in a system based on the Statements of Belief would be accepting responsibility. If this were common student behavior, we would see:

- student learning groups

- student/teacher relationships based on respect, not authority
- students having a *real voice* in matters (not just "token" students)
- students would gain maturity - less teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, truancy, etc.
- student evaluations of teachers based on teaching ability, creativity, and student/teacher relationships

Students would need to develop knowledge, skills, and abilities in communication, applying positive peer pressure, leadership, and organization. This would also require the development of high levels of trust, respect, and good manners.

Role of Parents

Parents identified their major responsibility as one of instilling the Statements of Belief at home. They suggested the outcomes of such action would be a decrease in discipline problems, an increase in student self-esteem, and more acceptance of and respect for others. In addition, they stressed that the school should respect parents' and students' opinions. They emphasized that the beliefs should be practiced in all relationships.

In order to instill the beliefs in the home, parents need to improve or develop knowledge, skills, and abilities in the following areas:

- listening
- democratic participation
- parenting
- love and caring
- communication (e.g., conversing and questioning)
- providing everyday needs

A second major responsibility of parents is to monitor and share feelings about whether the educational institution is true to the Statements of Belief. Some of the questions they felt might be asked of the current organization are as follows: Has the status quo changed? In what ways? Is there progress? How much bang for bucks does the system provide? What change in management styles are necessary? Are changes making a difference in students?

They emphasized a need for consensus decision making and suggested the following knowledge, skills, and abilities would be needed:

- skepticism, persistence, followership
- knowledge and critical thinking
- cooperation
- self-esteem
- positive relationships and an openness to other ideas
- challenging, yet, cooperative and encouraging
- obligating oneself (commitment)

Students would benefit from parental modeling of a sense of civic responsibility, attitudes of trust and cooperation, and working as a team with others.

The parents identified the following resources as necessary to accomplish the above: time, money to "buy" time, and commitment.

The third major responsibility for parents would be their participation in policy development. All constituencies would be involved in decision making with equal representation. This would result in:

- shared ownership of policies
- trust
- responsibility of everyone for students' achievement

The parents identified the following knowledge, skills, and abilities they would need in order to participate effectively:

- people skills
- understanding and acceptance of others
- "groupsmanship"
- listening

The resources parents would need include information access, time, and organized parent groups (e.g., PTA/PTO).

Parental modeling would encourage student learning in the following areas:

- democracy in action
- learn what they do makes a difference
- personal control or influence over their own circumstances

- democracy in action
- learn what they do makes a difference
- personal control or influence over their own circumstances

Role of the Superintendent

The superintendents began by listing the following five tenets:

1. School improvement is necessary.
2. Improving education is a process (not a destination).
3. The superintendent has a key *leadership* role in the process (not a *power* role).
4. Change, to be effective, must be holistic.
5. Needs of children are everchanging.

The superintendents summarized their role with three words: commit, involve, and communicate.

They suggested a superintendent's responsibility is to commit to the following:

- vision
- beliefs/core values
- courage to act
- modeling
- holding self accountable to seek consistent behavior

They asserted, "Where there is no vision, the people perish!"

The superintendent's responsibility to involve others in the educational system was summarized by the following:

- enable others to participate
- participation by all
- share decisions
- facilitate

Communicate included the development of a common language and common values and beliefs that are widely broadcast to gain school and community support.

Role of the School Board

The school board members identified hiring and evaluating the superintendent as their first major responsibility. The board would seek formal input for hiring and informal input for evaluation. They would hold the superintendent accountable for:

- following the shared belief statements and mission (e.g., fair and consistent)
- developing and maintaining a positive educational climate -- both school and community -- through effective communication
- student achievement as the bottom line accountability
- recruitment and development of staff
- budget that reflects goals
- effective long and short term planning

While they believed district staff and public should help set standards, they emphasized the board would have final authority.

Board members would need the following knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- realize their limitations and get outside expertise
- honesty and integrity
- look for measurable characteristics and outcomes

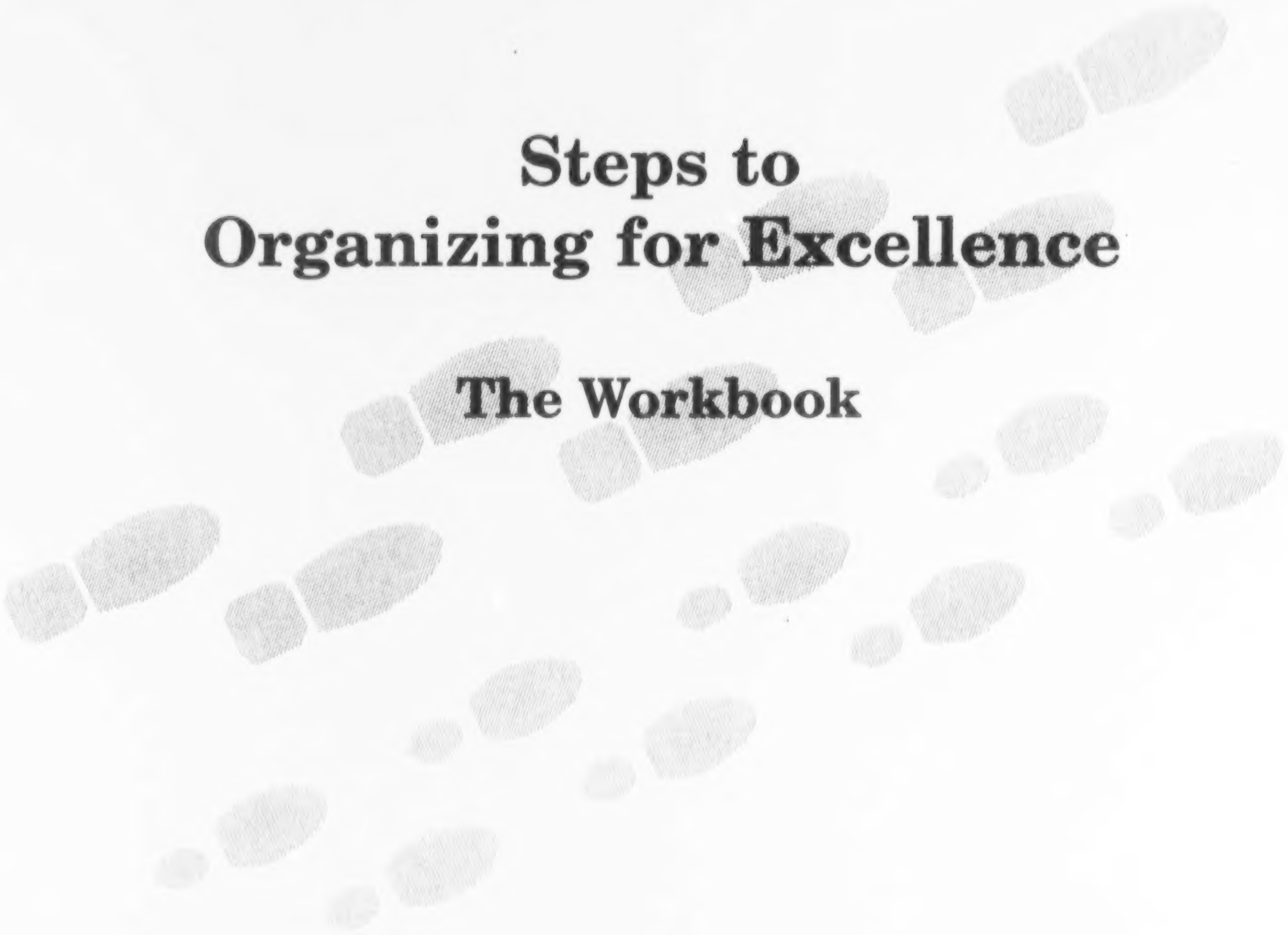
The resources needed were identified as a time and personnel compensation study to determine the cost of various options.

The second major responsibility identified by the board members was budget approval. They would determine if the budget responded to goals established with staff and community involvement and based on needs assessment data. Public relations -- hearings, newsletters, town meetings, development of goals -- was considered important. They would also monitor to make sure expenditures conformed to the budget and conduct school/community sunset reviews. In order to have an effectively run system, they would delegate a great many of the budget-making functions.

The board would need knowledge, skills, and abilities in the following areas:

- school finances

- program cost vs. base line cost
- how to ask questions
- goals
- communication with the community



Steps to Organizing for Excellence

The Workbook

OERI
Office of Educational Research and Improvement

SEDL
Southwest Educational Development Laboratory

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PROLOGUE

STEPS TO ORGANIZING FOR EXCELLENCE

WEAVING A NEW DECISION-MAKING PARADIGM

This prologue to the Workbook provides an opportunity to apply in practice the philosophical framework on paradigms presented in the first section of the SEDL publication, *Weaving a New Paradigm: Steps to Organizing for Excellence* (Duttweiler & Mutchler, 1990). A district that is considering a major change in its organizational structure would be wise to use a strategy for designing the new structure that also recognizes the interdependence of the school, the home, and the community; incorporates multiple perspectives; and relies on shared leadership and commitment.

The following Stages A through G offer a suggested strategy for addressing the major issues of organizational change in a way that:

1. involves all the constituencies in the learning community, especially those who have been traditionally left out;
2. provides a mechanism that ensures multi-directional communication; and
3. builds broad-based commitment that survives the tenure of individual participants.

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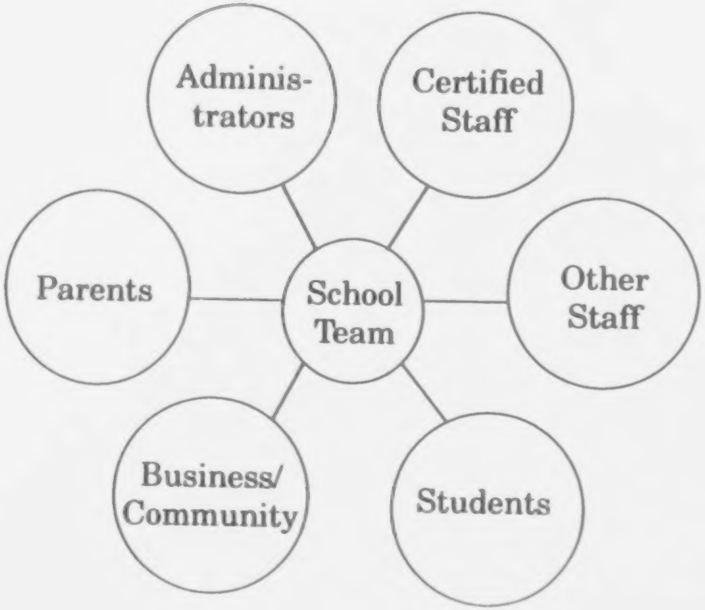
WEAVING A NEW DECISION-MAKING PARADIGM

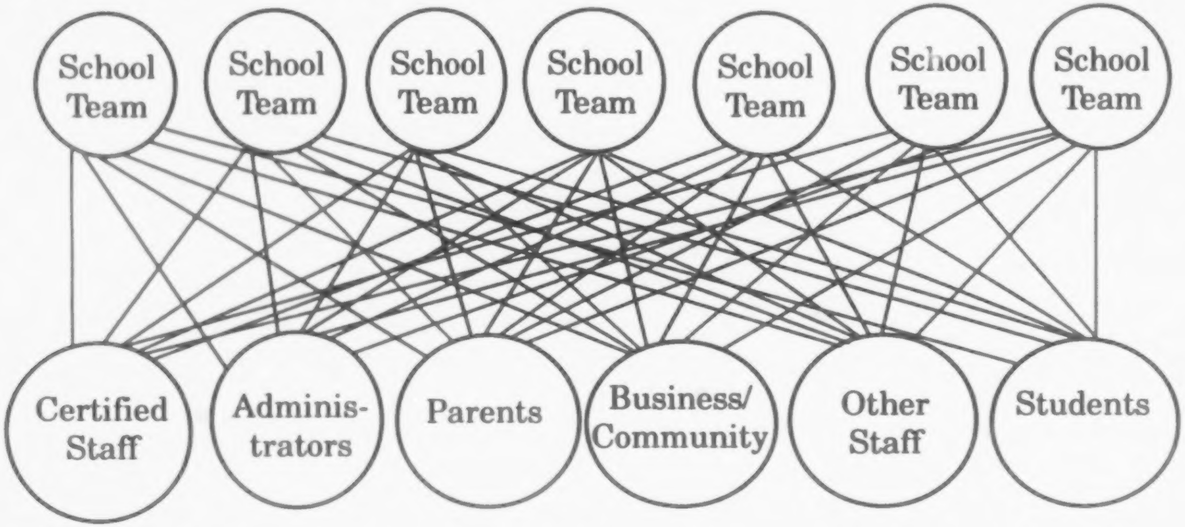
Stage A: Form School Level Teams -- Meet to discuss a specific major issue. Suggested membership includes one or more members from each of the following groups:

- school administrators
- certified staff
- other staff
- parents
- business/community
- students



Stage B: Meet in District Role-Alike Groups -- School Teams meet together at the district level in "role-alike" groups to discuss the issue.

Alternate Stage B: Large districts may need to ensure that the Role-Alike Groups are not too large (over 15) by having school-level teams meet in feeder-school or area Role-Alike Groups.



Stage C: Form a District Council -- Each district (feeder-school or area) Role-Alike Group chooses one or more representatives to serve on the District Council. Working with the reports of the Role-Alike Group representatives, the District Council develops, through consensus, a recommended course of action. As representatives of constituent groups, individual District Council members gain both confidence and credibility from speaking for their group.

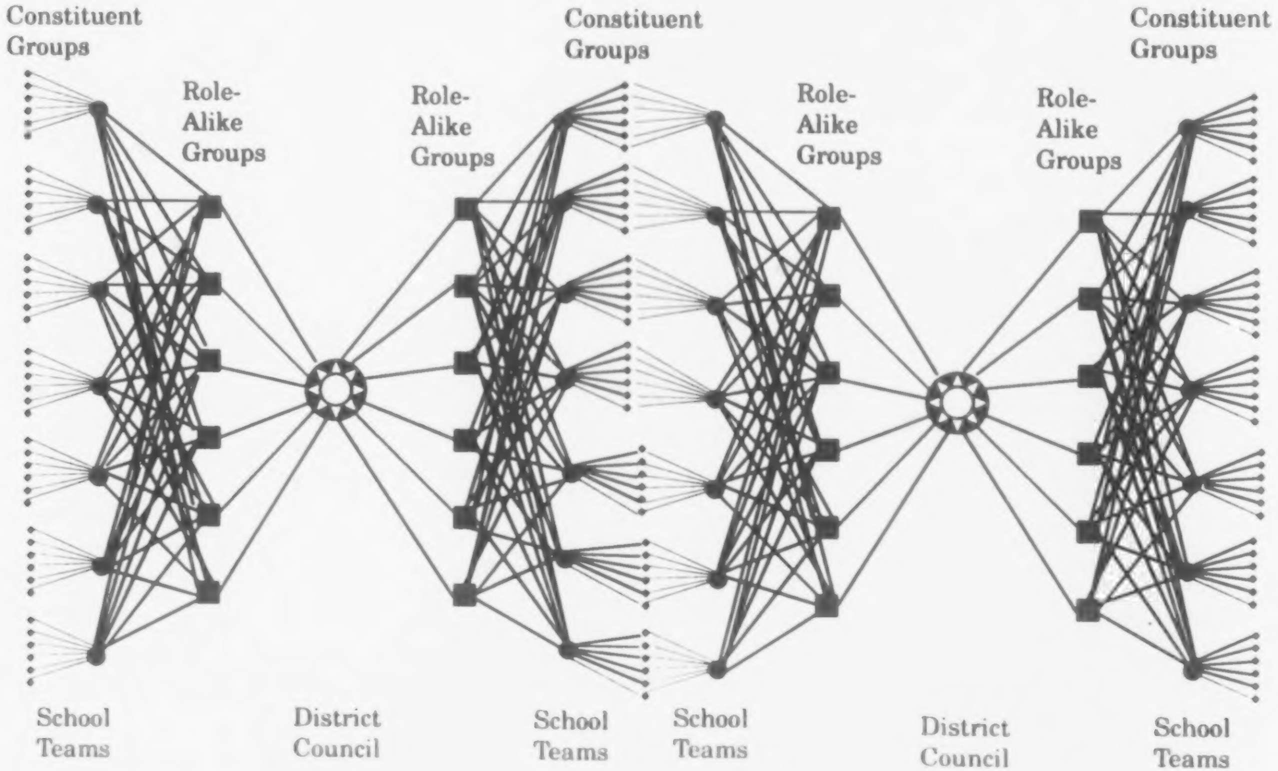
Stage D: Meet in District Role-Alike Groups -- Role-Alike Groups meet together to hear reports of the District Council representatives.

Stage E: School Teams Meet with School Constituency -- School Teams meet to develop a comprehensive perspective to present to their campus constituency. The teams then meet with their campus constituency to discuss recommendations of District Council and to discuss campus response, questions, recommendations, or suggestions.

Stage F: Meet in District Role-Alike Groups -- The Role-Alike Groups meet to discuss School Teams' reactions and to advise District Council representatives on recommendations for District Council action.

Stage G: District Council Meets -- The District Council meets again to gain consensus on a course of action.

The process from Stage D to G is continued until consensus on the issue is reached.



THE WORKBOOK

The Workbook is designed to provide districts with a set of provocative questions to guide the process of redesigning the organizational structure of the system. Based on research and practitioners' experiences in implementing shared decision making and school-based management, it is designed to be used by district decision-making teams, preferably developed through the strategy suggested in the prologue.

The twelve steps are offered sequentially, but do not, necessarily, have to be followed in the order presented. As teams develop more insight into the problems they are trying to solve, they may find they will want to revisit one or more of the steps and revise the work done at a previous point.

The Workbook has been developed with the following underlying assumptions: (1) the interdependence of school, home, and community makes it essential that people from all sectors are considered a part of the *learning community*; (2) the need for multiple perspectives in problem solving makes it essential that people from all sectors are included in discussions about those problems; and (3) the need for shared leadership and commitment makes it essential that people from all sectors are part of the decision-making process.

STEPS TO ORGANIZING FOR EXCELLENCE

STEP 1: FORM DECISION-MAKING TEAMS TO PLAN DISTRICT CHANGE

A. ***What types of decision-making teams will you need?***
Consider the need for campus, area, and district level teams.

B. ***What constituent groups will be represented?***

C. ***How will the members be chosen?***

D. ***What decision-making authority will the teams have?***

Develop an Action Plan for Step 1 to Get From Where You Are to Where You Want to Be

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP 2: DEVELOP SKILLS FOR WORKING EFFECTIVELY IN GROUPS

A. How will you provide time for collaboration and decision making?

B. What training in group processes will team members need?
Consider: team building, problem solving, consensus decision making, establishing rules, diagnosing group effectiveness, conflict resolution, and task and maintenance functions.

Develop an Action Plan for Step 2 to Get From Where You Are to Where You Want to Be

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP 3: DEVELOP STATEMENTS OF BELIEF TO GUIDE POLICY AND PRACTICE

A. ***How will you develop a set of shared beliefs that reflects your community's fundamental beliefs about the purpose of education, how the educational system should work, and how people should be treated within the system?***

1. ***What criteria will you use to develop a set of Statements of Belief?***

Consider the following:

Relevance: Is this a fundamental, core belief?
Importance: Can we answer the question, "What difference does this statement make?"
Common Meaning: Can this statement be understood by the average person? Is it clearly stated?
Context: Does the statement "fit" within the context of the whole set? Does it contribute to the whole meaning?
Universality: Can this belief statement be applied at all levels of the system (school and district); to all involved (students, teachers, administrators, school board members, etc.); and in all areas (curriculum, instruction, staff development, budgeting, scheduling, etc.)?

2. ***How will you ensure broad involvement in the development of those beliefs?***

STEP 3: ***Continued***

Statements of Belief

STEP 3: ***Continued***

B. How will you communicate the Statements of Belief to the entire community?

C. How will you gain community support and commitment?

Develop an Action Plan for Step 3 to Get From Where You Are to Where You Want to Be

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP 4: DEVELOP AN IDEAL VISION FOR YOUR DISTRICT

What should your system look like if your Statements of Belief guide policy and practice?

(Describe an overall vision in each area that, if realized, would represent a tremendous improvement in student achievement, community involvement, teacher commitment, and school effectiveness. You will have an opportunity to be more specific in Steps 5 through 8.)

Classroom

Desired Outcomes

Distribution of Authority

Resource Allocation

Roles and Responsibilities

STEP 4: ***Continued***

School

Desired Outcomes

Distribution of Authority

Resource Allocation

Roles and Responsibilities

STEP 4: ***Continued***

District

Desired Outcomes

Distribution of Authority

Resource Allocation

Roles and Responsibilities

STEP 4: ***Continued***

Community Involvement

Desired Outcomes

Distribution of Authority

Resource Allocation

Roles and Responsibilities

Develop an Action Plan for Step 4 to Get From Where You Are to Where You Want to Be

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP 5: DEVELOP DISTRICT OUTCOMES BASED ON STATEMENTS OF BELIEF

A. *Who will be involved in deciding what outcomes are expected by the district?*

B. *How will the expected outcomes be selected?*

STEP 5: ***Continued***

Expected Outcomes

Student	
School	
District	

STEP 5: ***Continued***

C. How will the district measure successful achievement of each outcome ?

EXPECTED OUTCOMES	*INDICATOR OF SUCCESSFUL ACHIEVEMENT*

STEP 5: ***Continued***

EXPECTED OUTCOMES	*INDICATOR OF SUCCESSFUL ACHIEVEMENT*

STEP 5: *Continued*

D. ***How will expected outcomes be communicated throughout the system?***

E. ***How will successful achievement of outcomes be rewarded?***
Student

School

District

F. ***How will failure to achieve outcomes be corrected?***
Student

School

District

Develop an Action Plan for Step 5 to Get From Where You Are to Where You Want to Be

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

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STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP 6: DEVELOP A DECISION-MAKING FRAMEWORK TO ENABLE SCHOOLS TO MEET DISTRICT OUTCOMES

At what level should decisions be made in order to ensure that district outcomes are met in ways consistent with the Statements of Belief? Consider the following:

Personnel
(Teachers, Administrators, Other Certified Staff, Paraprofessionals)
Screening
Selection
Hiring
Assignment
Staff development
Staff assessment
Other

Resources/Services
Materials acquisition
Allocation of funds
Budgeting
Food services
Media services
Maintenance
Facilities
Transportation
Other

Curriculum/Instruction
Curriculum
Instruction
Grouping
Scheduling
Special Programs
Technology
Student Assessment
Textbook selection
Student-teacher ratio
Other

Consider a *Framework* that allows each school to:

1) Adapt to needs of school's students (be student-centered).
2) Have the flexibility to change when needed.
3) Initiate and implement school improvement efforts that have significant results.
4) Develop means for achieving district outcomes.

Consider a *Framework* that allows the district to:

1) Coordinate needed support to schools.
2) Facilitate schools' achievement of district outcomes.
3) Maintain standards of equity.
4) Establish and monitor standards of quality.

STEP 6: ***Continued***

AREA	SCHOOL LEVEL	DISTRICT LEVEL

STEP 6: ***Continued***

AREA	SCHOOL LEVEL	DISTRICT LEVEL

Develop an Action Plan for Step 6 to Get From Where You Are to Where You Want to Be

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP 7: RESOURCE ALLOCATION

What resources will schools need to control in order to implement school-level decisions and achieve those outcomes for which they are responsible?

DECISION AREA	RESOURCES

DECISION AREA	RESOURCES

Develop an Action Plan for Step 7 to Get From Where You Are to Where You Want to Be

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP 8: DEFINE NEW ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AT DISTRICT AND SCHOOL LEVELS

How will the roles and/or functions at each level be redefined? Consider the following:

Role	Functions	Skills Needed
School Administrators		
Teachers		
Other School Staff		
Students		
Parents		

STEP 8: *Continued*

Role	Functions	Skills Needed
School Board		
Superintendent		
Central Office Staff		
Business\Community		

Develop an Action Plan for Step 8 to Get From Where You Are to Where You Want to Be

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP 9: INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS DEVELOP A PLAN TO ACHIEVE DISTRICT OUTCOMES

A. ***What are the special needs of the school's students, parents, and community?***

B. ***Considering those special needs, how will the school achieve district outcomes?***
Consider: Grouping, scheduling, staffing, parent involvement, staff development, instruction, curriculum, technology, etc.

Develop an Action Plan for Step 9 to Get From Where You Are to Where You Want to Be

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP 10: TRAIN FOR NEW ROLES AT DISTRICT AND SCHOOL LEVELS

A. ***Who needs to be trained?***

B. ***How will you provide time for training?***

C. ***What kinds of skill training will you provide? (If you skipped Step 2, you may want to reconsider.)***

Develop an Action Plan for Step 10 to Get From Where You Are to Where You Want to Be

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP 11: SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT IDENTIFY NEEDED POLICY CHANGES

A. What district or state mandates/regulations are compatible with achieving district outcomes?

District

State

STEP 11: *Continued*

B. What district or state mandates/regulations are in conflict with achieving district outcomes?

District

State

STEP 11: ***Continued***

C. ***What policies, rules, regulations, procedures, or practices need to be changed in order to achieve district outcomes?***

District Level

State Level

Develop an Action Plan for Step 11 to Get From Where You Are to Where You Want to Be

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEPS TO ORGANIZING FOR EXCELLENCE (continued)

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP 12: MONITOR COMMITMENT

District Commitment:

1. Are the Statements of Belief guiding district policy and practice?
2. Does the district provide the schools with a supportive organizational context?
3. Is the communications network open, clear, and multi-directional?
4. Is the district organized for school-based management and shared decision making?
5. Is systematic staff development available?
6. Does the district delegate to the schools appropriate control over resources?
7. Does the district provide schools sufficient resources to achieve district outcomes?
8. Are district outcomes being achieved?

School Commitment:

1. Are the Statements of Belief guiding school policy and practice?
2. Does the school provide a climate that supports student learning?
3. Is the communications network open, clear, and multi-directional?
4. Is the school organized for school-based management and shared decision making?
5. Is systematic staff development available?
6. Is there broad decision-making participation in the distribution of resources within the school?
7. Do teachers have sufficient resources to fulfill their responsibilities?
8. Is the school achieving district outcomes?

Develop an Action Plan for Step 12 to Get From Where You Are to Where You Want to Be

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

STEP/ACTIVITY	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIME LINE

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APPENDIX A

A SAMPLE OF VISIONS

This appendix provides a sample of research, vision statements, principles, and beliefs that have guided efforts to improve educational practice. Clear, coherent statements of vision or belief are difficult to find in the literature. The following are some examples of the statements, assumptions, values, and beliefs that are available. The examples below illustrate a variety of visions that attempt to define "the right thing to do" in education. These include the following:

- a brief synthesis of the recent research on effective schools
- *Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century* from the Carnegie Council of Adolescent Development
- "Assumptions for a Non-Rational World" from Patterson, Purkey, and Parker
- "Assumptions of Invitational Education" from Purkey and Novak
- "Values for Childhood and Schooling" from Goodlad, Klien, and Associates
- "The Rochester Manifesto" from Rochester (New York) City Schools
- "Four Essential Goals for High Schools" from Boyer
- "The Coalition of Essential Schools' Common Principles"
- "The Education Commission of the States RE:Learning Project"
- "Criteria for Worthwhile Activities -- A Set of Beliefs" from Sergiovanni

Effective School Research: A Guide

Exemplary schools identified by effective school studies provide a picture of the factors that influence school quality and thereby contribute to developing a vision of educational excellence. Looking at the findings from research on effective schools, effective teaching, and effective school administration, the following characteristics of effective schools emerge (Duttweiler, 1990):

Effective Schools Are Student Centered. Effective schools make an effort to serve all students; create support networks to assist students; involve students in school affairs; respect and celebrate the ethnic and linguistic differences among students; and have student welfare as a first priority. They use community volunteers, parents, teacher aides, and peer tutors to provide close, personal attention to students. They involve students in many of the activities of running a school. Student needs are given priority over other concerns. An atmosphere of cooperation and trust is created through a high level of interaction between students and teachers.

Effective Schools Offer Academically Rich Programs. Student development and the provision of a well-rounded academic program are the primary goals. Effective schools address higher- as well as lower-order cognitive objectives; provide an enriched environment through a variety of options; have an active co-curricular program; provide in-depth coverage of content; and appropriately monitor student progress and provide feedback.

Effective Schools Provide Instruction That Promotes Student Learning. Effective schools have a distinctive normative structure that supports instruction. They design their programs to ensure academic success and to head off academic problems. Teachers and administrators believe that all students can learn and feel responsible for seeing that they do. Teachers and administrators believe in their own ability to influence students' learning. Teachers communicate expectations to students; provide focused and organized instructional sessions; adapt instruction to student needs; anticipate and correct student misconceptions; and use a variety of teaching strategies. In general, effective schools set high standards, closely and regularly monitor performance, and recognize and reward effort and success.

Effective Schools Have a Positive School Climate. Effective schools have a clear organizational personality, characterized by stated missions, goals, values and standards of performance. They have a sense of order, purpose, and direction fostered by consistency among teachers; an atmosphere of encouragement where students are praised and rewarded; a work-centered environment; and high optimism and expectations for student learning. Teachers and principals commit themselves to breaking down institutional and community barriers to equality. They create a learning environment that is open, friendly, and culturally inviting. Using community resources, they acknowledge the ethnic and racial identity of their students. They provide encouragement and take a positive approach to discipline. Administrators model the behaviors that they say are important.

Effective Schools Foster Collegial Interaction. Effective schools strive to create professional environments for teachers that facilitate the accomplishment of their work. Teachers participate in decisions affecting their work; have reasonable control or autonomy to carry out work; share a sense of purpose and community; receive recognition for contributions to the organization; and are treated with respect and dignity by others in the workplace. Teachers work together as colleagues in instruction, to plan curriculum, and to refine teaching practices.

Effective Schools Have Extensive Staff Development. The teacher evaluation system is used to help teachers improve their skills. Inservice is practical, on-the-job training that is tailored to meet the specific needs of staff members. The emphasis is on the exchange of practical teaching techniques and on making training an integral part of a collaborative educational environment. Teachers and administrators conduct inservice programs and are provided with ample staff development opportunities for their own development. Administrators and teachers are encouraged to reflect on their practices.

Effective Schools Practice Shared Leadership. Instructional leadership does not depend solely on the principal. School administrators understand and use a leadership style appropriate for professionals; solve problems through collaboration, team, or group decision making; know their staff and delegate authority; communicate and build cohesiveness; and use their position to recognize and reward accomplishments of both staff and students. While no single leadership style dominates, common leadership features include setting and maintaining direction for the school and facilitating the work of teachers by adopting a wide range of supportive behaviors. Involvement in decision making is a critical element. Involvement begins with members of the school community developing the goals, mission, and values of the school. Decisions are made with input from those to be affected by the decision.

Effective Schools Are Staffed With Creative Problem Solvers. Staff members in effective schools are unwilling to accept defeat or settle for mediocrity. They turn their problems into challenges, design solutions, and implement them. They go about their tasks with commitment, creativity, persistence, and professionalism. Resources such as time, facilities, staff expertise, and volunteers are used to maximum advantage to facilitate the process of teaching and learning.

Effective Schools Involve Parents and the Community. There is a linkage between the school and the community. Effective schools establish a variety of methods for communicating with parents and the community. They involve parents and community members in the activities of the school, include them in the decision-making process, use them as resources to extend the efforts of the school, and depend on them to provide good public relations for the school. They make sure that parents are involved in their children's learning. Effective schools are contributory partners to the community they serve. They teach young people that they have a responsible part to play in society, that their contributions are valued.

Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century

The Task Force on Education of Young Adolescents was established by the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development (Turning Points, 1989). Focusing on the needs of young adolescents, the Task Force commissioned papers, interviewed experts in relevant fields, and met with teachers, principals, students, health professionals, and leaders of youth-serving community organizations. The report, *Turning Points*, makes the following recommendations for middle grade schools:

> Create small communities for learning where stable, close, mutually respectful relationships with adults and peers are considered fundamental for intellectual development and personal growth.
>
> Teach a core academic program that results in students who are literate, including in the sciences, and who know how to think critically, lead a healthy life, behave ethically, and assume the responsibilities of citizenship in a pluralistic society.
>
> Ensure success for all students through elimination of tracking by achievement level and promotion of cooperative learning, flexibility

in arranging instructional time, and adequate resources (time, space, equipment, and materials) for teachers.

Empower teachers and administrators to make decisions about the experiences of middle grade students through creative control by teachers over the instructional program linked to greater responsibilities for students' performance, governance committees that assist the principal in designing and coordinating school-wide programs, and autonomy and leadership within sub-schools or houses to create environments tailored to enhance the intellectual and emotional development of all youth.

Staff middle grade schools with teachers who are expert at teaching young adolescents and who have been specially prepared for assignment to the middle grades.

Improve academic performance through fostering the health and fitness of young adolescents by providing a health coordinator in every middle grade school, access to health care and counseling services, and a health-promoting school environment.

Reengage families in the education of young adolescents by giving families meaningful roles in school governance, communicating with families about the school program and students' progress, and offering families opportunities to support the learning process at home and at the school.

Connect schools and communities, which together share responsibility for each middle grade student's success, through identifying service opportunities in the community, establishing partnerships and collaborations to ensure students' access to health and social services, and using community resources to enrich the instructional program and opportunities for constructive after-school activities.

Assumptions for a Non-Rational World

Few educators challenge the traditional assumptions on which the educational system is based, but, to conceive of alternatives or produce new visions, new assumptions need to be considered. Patterson, Purkey, and Parker (1986) suggest that the educational system is governed by a set of inaccurate assumptions derived from the belief that the system functions within a rational environment. They propose a different -- "nonrational" -- way of thinking that challenges those assumptions. They suggest that the prevailing way of thinking about school organization has come from an entrenched perception about the world in which educators work. They offer assumptions based on a perception of a "nonrational" world as follows:

1. **Organizational Goals**

   - Old Assumption: School systems are guided by a single set of uniform goals.

   - New Assumption: School systems are necessarily guided by multiple and sometimes competing sets of goals.

2. **Power**

   - Old Assumption: Power in school systems is (and should be) located at the top.

   - New Assumption: Power in school systems is distributed throughout the organization.

3. **Decision Making**

   - Old Assumption: Decision making in school systems is a logical problem-solving process that arrives at the one best solution.

   - New Assumption: Decision making in school systems is inevitably a bargaining process to arrive at solutions that satisfy a number of constituencies.

4. **External Environment**

   - Old Assumption: The public is supportive of school systems and influences them in predictable and marginal ways.

   - New Assumption: The public legitimately influences school systems in major ways that are sometimes unpredictable.

5. Teaching Process

- Old Assumption: There is one best way to teach for maximum educational effectiveness.

- New Assumption: There are a variety of situationally appropriate ways to teach that are optimally effective.

Assumptions of Invitational Education

Purkey and Novak (1988) propose *Invitational Education* as an emerging model of the educative process consisting of four value-based assumptions about the nature of people and their potential. *Invitational Education* provides both a theoretical framework and practical strategies for what educators can do to create schools where people want to be and want to learn. Educators who accept the assumptions of the model and who operate from a position of trust, respect, intentionality, and optimism have a far greater chance of creating an inviting school. The following is a summary of the four assumptions (Purkey and Novak, 1988):

1. *People are able, valuable, and responsible and should be treated accordingly.* How educators behave personally and professionally among themselves and with others is determined by whether they accept this assumption. If educators believe that some students are unable, worthless, and irresponsible, they will find ways to fulfill the prophecy. If educators believe that each student is able to learn, is worthy of respect, and can be responsible, they will find ways for students to succeed in school.

2. *Education should be a collaborative, cooperative activity.* Getting people to do what is desired without involving them in the process is like beating on cold iron. Even if the effort is successful, the energy expended is disproportionate to what is accomplished. There are moral and ethical issues involved in doing things *with* people as opposed to doing things *to* people. People are entitled to a voice in their own destiny.

3. *People possess untapped potential in all areas of human endeavor.* The curricula we devise, the policies we establish, the programs we sponsor, and the physical environments we create are all

anchored in assumptions regarding individuals and their potential. Human potential, though not always apparent, is always there, waiting to be discovered and invited forth.

4. *Human potential can best be realized by places, policies, and processes that are specifically designed to invite development, and by people who are intentionally inviting with themselves and others, personally and professionally.* In practice, *Invitational Education* focuses on the people, places, policies, and programs that transmit messages promoting human relationships and individual potential.

Values for Childhood Schooling

Goodlad, Klein, and Associates (1974) identified "some values for childhood schooling." These included the following:

- The best hope for a self-renewing society is a self-renewing individual who has been provided with every possible opportunity to develop his or her unique talents and capabilities. Teachers must be engaged continuously in a process of diagnosis to determine not just whether the level of work is appropriate for the child but whether there might be, for her or him, better work.

- The development of rational powers is the good work for which education is admirably suited and uniquely responsible. Rationality involves the acquisition of knowledge, the careful weighing and appraising of that knowledge, the consideration of alternatives, the formulation of convictions, and action based on such convictions.

- Educated persons are fully aware of societal restraints, the reasons for them, and their appropriateness or inappropriateness for mankind. They do not need to be policed, coerced, or threatened in order to behave responsibly. Consequently, school and classroom should emphasize, from the very earliest years, opportunities for children to assume responsibility for their own behavior.

- The most useful learning is to have learned how to learn. Part of this learning lies in understanding both the principles linking phenomena and that there are such principles. Most of the rest is in acquiring tools and processes ranging from reading skills to modes of thinking about or inquiring into the widest possible array of human and physical phenomena. The school must eschew, then, the deceptively easy temptation to teach a rhetoric of conclusions.

- Education is a lifelong process in which schooling plays a decreasingly significant role.

- There are many roads to learning. It is extremely unlikely that any best one will be discovered. Rather there are likely to be better or worse ways for certain children under certain conditions. Therefore, it seems desirable for school and classroom to open up many possibilities, to provide always a range of alternatives.

The Rochester Manifesto -- Shared Beliefs and Values

In December 1985, as acting superintendent of the Rochester (New York) City School District, Peter McWalters presented to the school board a mission statement that he said should drive the board's deliberations during its budget-making process. The statement was far more than a budget document. Laying out what McWalters called the "shared values and beliefs" of the organization, the statement became, in essence, a manifesto for the Rochester revolution. The manifesto (known as the superintendent's mission statement) lays out the following ideals (*Executive Educator*, January 1989):

- All children can learn; it's up to the school to overcome any socioeconomic or preschool disadvantage.

- The interaction between teachers and students is the most important interaction in the school system. Schools are most productive when teachers understand the school system's mission and participate in developing goals and programs for their students.

- The principal creates the kind of school environment that supports instruction and learning.

- To be successful academically, the student must value learning and must see a relationship between education and future opportunities.

- Parents shape their children's motivation, confidence, and academic success by being interested and involved in their academic development.

- The community as a whole strengthens the school's effectiveness by understanding its goals and participating in efforts to ensure student success.

Four Essential Goals for High Schools

Boyer (1983) suggested that, to be effective, high schools must have a sense of purpose. Teachers, students, administrators, and parents must share a vision of what they are trying to accomplish. He proposed the following four essential goals:

> First, the high school should help all students develop the capacity to think critically and communicate effectively through a mastery of language.
>
> Second, the high school should help all students learn about themselves, the human heritage, and the interdependent world in which they live through a core curriculum based upon consequential human experiences common to all people.
>
> Third, the high school should prepare all students for work and further education through a program of electives that develop individual aptitudes and interests.
>
> Fourth, the high school should help all students fulfill their social and civic obligations through school and community service.

The Coalition of Essential Schools' Common Principles

The Re:Learning effort of the Education Commission of the States (1989) and the Coalition for Essential Schools is a nationwide program calling for redesigning the total school system. Its major focus is the belief that the primary purpose of schooling is to help all students learn to use their minds well. The philosophical bedrock of the Coalition is spelled out in the Common Principals that follow.

1. The school should focus on helping adolescents to learn to use their minds well. Schools should not attempt to be "comprehensive" if such a claim is made at the expense of the school's central intellectual purpose.

2. The school's goals should be simple: that each student master a limited number of essential skills and areas of knowledge. While these skills and areas will, to varying degrees, reflect the traditional academic disciplines, the program's design should be shaped by the intellectual and imaginative powers and competencies that students need, rather than necessarily by "subjects" as conventionally defined. The aphorism "Less Is More" should dominate. Curricular decisions should be guided by the aim of thorough student mastery and achievement rather than be an effort merely to "cover content."

3. The school's goals should apply to all students, while the means to these goals will vary as those students themselves vary. School practice should be tailor-made to meet the needs of every group or class of adolescents.

4. Teaching and learning should be personalized to the maximum feasible extent. Efforts should be directed toward a goal that no teacher have direct responsibility for more than eighty students. To capitalize on this personalization, decisions about the students' and teachers' time and the choice of teaching materials and specific pedagogies must be unreservedly placed in the hands of the principal and staff.

5. The governing practical metaphor of the school should be student-as-worker, rather than the more familiar metaphor of teacher-as-deliverer-of-instructional-services. Accordingly, a prominent pedagogy will be coaching, to provoke students to learn how to learn and thus to teach themselves.

6. Students entering secondary school studies are those who can show competence in language and elementary mathematics. Students of traditional high-school age but not yet at appropriate levels of competence to enter secondary school studies will be provided intensive remedial work to assist them

quickly to meet these standards. The diploma should be awarded upon a successful final demonstration of mastery for graduation - an "Exhibition." This Exhibition by the student of his or her grasp of the central skills and knowledge of the school's program may be jointly administered by the faculty and by higher authorities. As the diploma is awarded when earned, the school's program proceeds with no strict age grading and with no system of "credits earned" by "time spent" in class. The emphasis is on the students' demonstration that they can do important things.

7. The tone of the school should explicitly and self-consciously stress values of unanxious expectation ("I won't threaten you but I expect much of you"), of trust (until abused), and of decency (the values of fairness, generosity, and tolerance). Incentives appropriate to the school's particular students and teachers should be emphasized, and parents should be treated as essential collaborators.

8. The principal and teachers should perceive themselves as generalists first (teachers and scholars in general education) and specialists second (experts in but one particular discipline). Staff should expect multiple obligations (teacher-counselor-manager) and a sense of commitment to the entire school.

9. Ultimate administrative and budget targets should include, in addition to total student loads per teacher of eighty or fewer pupils, substantial time for collective planning by teachers, competitive salaries for staff, and an ultimate per pupil cost not to exceed that at traditional schools by more than ten percent. To accomplish this, administrative plans may have to show the phased reduction or elimination of some services now provided students in many traditional comprehensive secondary schools.

The Education Commission of the States RE:Learning Project

The Education Commission of the States (*"RE:Learning,"* 1989) proposes that the following principles be applied at the district and state level when redesigning policy and administrative practice.

1. Build a new vision of education. The public, business and state leaders, and education professionals should build a new shared

vision of how the state's education system should work to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to use their minds well through meaningful teaching and learning experiences.

2. Organize on behalf of student learning. The roles and responsibilities within the education system and the manner in which resources are allocated should be redesigned to support the best learning for all students, not bureaucratic or political interests.

3. Create new working relationships. Collaboration, shared leadership, and mutual responsibility should serve as the model for working relationships throughout the education system.

4. Develop a culture of learning. Adults throughout the system should come to see themselves as continual learners and problem solvers rather than purveyors of "right" answers and standardized solutions.

5. Develop a coherence and meaning in all actions. Actions, information, and data must be focused on moving together toward the shared vision of a new education system. Too often the education system is so bogged down with information and actions in bits and pieces that meaning is lost.

6. Act with regard for people. Long- and short-term actions to rebuild the education system should be balanced in ways that treat people with dignity and respect.

Criteria for Worthwhile Activities -- A Set of Beliefs

Sergiovanni (1987) points out that statements of belief provide the common cement bonding people together. Operationally, a well-defined set of such beliefs comprise a "platform." A platform can be thought of as "encompassing the defining principles and beliefs that guide the actions of individuals and that provide a basis for evaluating these actions" (p. 76). Platforms contain guiding principles from which individuals decide what to do and how to do it. They are instrumental in bringing about cohesion and concerted action. Platforms are the means by which mission statements and broad goals and purposes are articulated into practice. When formally stated and articulated, an "educational platform" consists of a series of assumptions, theories, and beliefs that guide the decision-making process on issues related to teaching and learning.

Sergiovanni developed an educational platform -- a sample set of agreements -- based on criteria for worthwhile activities suggested by James Raths. The following is a summary of the set of agreements:

An educational activity should do the following:

- permit students to make informed choices in carrying out the activity and to reflect on the consequences of their choices;
- assign students to active learning roles rather than passive ones;
- ask students to engage in inquiry into ideas, applications of intellectual processes, or current personal and social problems;
- involve students with reality;
- be successfully accomplished by students at different levels of ability;
- ask students to examine in a new setting ideas, applications, intellectual processes, and problems previously studied;
- examine topics or issues that are not normally considered by the major communication media in the nation;
- require students to rewrite, rehearse, or polish their initial efforts;
- involve students in the application and mastery of meaningful roles, standards, or disciplines;
- provide students with opportunities to share the planning, the carrying out of a plan, or the results of an activity with others.

APPENDIX B

Texas Partners Involved in the Development of Statements of Belief

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By special invitation of the Beliefs Development Committee to participate in the retreat hosted by Pampa ISD during July 1989

Sherry McCavit
Pampa ISD School Board

Margaret Williams
Pampa ISD, Teacher

APPENDIX C

District Demographic Sketches

Allen ISD is located in northeast Texas a short distance from Dallas. As the second largest district in Collin County, Allen has seen a growth rate of nearly 13% in the last year -- from 4663 students enrolled in fall 1989 to 5258 students on September 4, 1990. The district's seven schools include five elementary, one middle school, and one high school, with a total of 302 teachers. Student ethnicity has remained fairly stable in recent years, with a 10% minority population (4% African-American, 4% Latino, 1% Native American, and 1% Asian). Approximately 6% of the student population are in families of low socio-economic status, as reflected by their qualification for the free or reduced-price lunch program.

Austin ISD is located in central Texas 192 miles south of Dallas and 78 miles north of San Antonio. Situated in a growing metropolitan area, Austin is the largest district in Travis County and the fifth largest district in the state with 65,680 students enrolled on September 12, 1990 -- nearly a 5% increase over the previous year. The district currently has over 90 schools (66 elementary, 13 middle and junior highs, 10 high schools, an alternative school, and a number of facilities that serve special populations) and approximately 4300 teachers. As with many urban districts in Texas, Austin is experiencing an increase in percent of minority students. Total minority population shifted from 43% in 1988 to 57% in 1990, with the greatest increase seen in the number of Latino students. The district's current ethnic breakdown is 20% African-American, 35% Latino, and 2% Asian. Approximately 44% of students qualify for the free or reduced-price lunch program.

LaJoya ISD is located in far south Texas on the expressway that runs parallel to the United States border with Mexico. Though the district is mid-sized for Hidalgo County, the student population is growing rapidly. Student enrollment of 9195 on September 13, 1990, represents an increase of more than 7% over the fall 1989 enrollment, with school personnel projecting a final enrollment of as much as 10,000 for school year 1990-91. Total growth has neared 30% in the last three years. LaJoya currently has ten schools (seven elementary, two middle schools, and one high school) with 531 teachers. The student population is predominantly Latino (99%), and 92% of students qualify for the free or reduced-price lunch program.

Olton ISD is located in the lower Texas panhandle approximately 60 miles from eastern New Mexico. At a student population of 808 on September 9, 1990, it is the second largest district in rural Lamb County. The district's 64 teachers staff the three elementary, junior high, and senior high schools. Though the number of students has remained fairly stable, or even declined over the last ten years, the student population is changing. There are a large number of children from migrant families, and the minority population has grown to 69% (66% Latino and 3% African-American), with 63% of the students qualifying for the free or reduced-price lunch program.

Pampa ISD is located in the northern Texas panhandle, approximately 80 miles west of Oklahoma. With a student population of 4161 on September 17, 1990, it is the largest district in rural Gray County. Nine schools (six elementary, one middle school, one high school, and an alternative school) are staffed by 300 teachers. The student population has remained stable, or experienced some decline over the last few years. Student characteristics also have remained fairly stable; the district has a 12% minority population with an approximately even representation of African-American and Latino students, and 25% of the students qualify for the free or reduced-price lunch program.

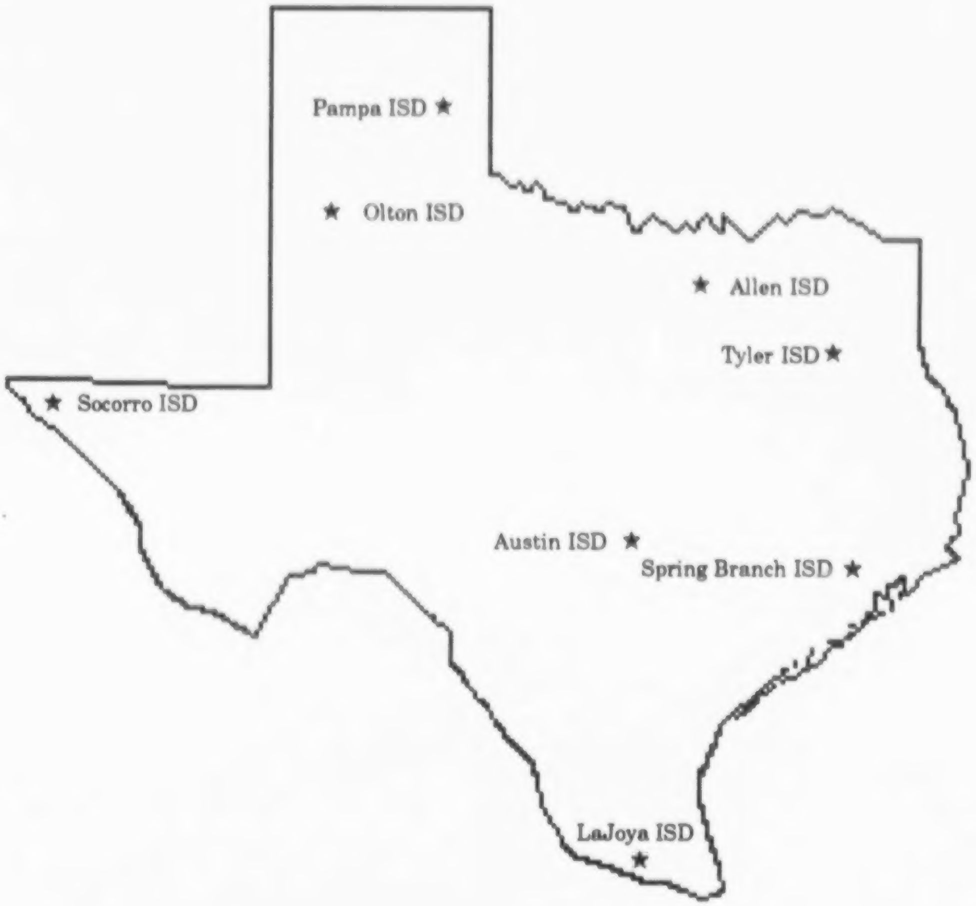
Socorro ISD is located in the city of El Paso in the far western tip of the state, where Texas meets the state of New Mexico and the Mexican border. Socorro is the smallest of three El Paso public school districts with 14,482 students enrolled on August 30, 1990. The district has experienced dramatic growth of nearly 24% over the previous year's enrollment of 11,702. There are 780 teachers staffing 14 schools - nine elementaries, two middle schools, two high schools, and a preschool. Student ethnicity and socio-economic status have remained fairly stable, with a 90% minority population (89% Latino and 1% other minorities) and 77% of students eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program.

Spring Branch ISD is located in Harris County in the suburbs of Houston, the largest city in the state. On September 17, 1990, 26,298 students were enrolled -- a 3% increase over fall 1989 enrollment. There are 1600 teachers staffing the district's 24 schools (22 elementary, six junior highs, four high schools, and two schools that serve special populations). The student population is approximately 50% minority (10% African-American, 32% Latino, and 8% Asian). Nearly 40% of students qualify for the free or reduced-price lunch program. The district's diversity is illustrated by the facts that students bring over

40 languages into the schools, and some of the wealthiest and the poorest Texans reside in the district's boundaries.

Tyler ISD is located in the northeastern section of the state, approximately 100 miles southeast of Dallas. The district has the largest student population in Smith County -- 16,205 students were enrolled on September 10, 1990. The number of students has remained stable, or even experienced some decline, in recent years. Twenty-six schools (16 elementary, six middle, two high, one alternative, and one school serving special populations) are staffed by 1092 teachers. Student population is nearing 50% minority (35% African-American, 11% Latino), and 36% of students qualify for the free or reduced-price lunch program.

Texas/SEDL "Organizing for Excellence" Partner Districts



Texas/SEDL Conference Participants
Organizing the Educational System for Excellence: The Power of Belief

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Allen High School

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Superintendent

Ms. Barbara Gargiulo
Secondary Teacher
Ford Middle School

Mr. Greg Gifford
Student
Allen High School

Mrs. Sharon Hamner
Parent

Mr. James Kerr
School Board Member

Mr. Vern Lahart
Business Representative

Dr. Norma Lewis
Principal
Reed Elementary School

Ms. Cathy Zeek
Teacher
Vaughan Elementary School

AUSTIN ISD

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School Board Member

Dr. John Ellis
Superintendent

Ms. Carol V. Hovland
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Johnston High School

Dr. David Kernwein
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Crockett High School

Mr. Sam Perez
Business Representative

Mrs. Regina Rogoff
Parent

Mr. Hulberto Saenz
Principal
St. Elmo School

Mr. Ryan Scarborough
Student
Johnston High School

Mr. Terry Steele
Teacher
Allison Elementary School

LA JOYA ISD

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PTA President

Ms. Alda T. Benavides
Principal
Kika Elementary

LA JOYA (continued)

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School Board Member

Ms. Pat Garza
Teacher
La Joya High School

Ms. Dianabel Gomez
Teacher
J.F.K. Elementary

Mr. William "Billy" Leo
Business Representative

Mr. Juan D. Salinas
Principal
Nellie Schunior Jr. High

Mr. Macario Solis
Student
La Joya High

Mr. Roberto Zamora
Superintendent

OLTON ISD

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School Board Member

Ms. Cindy Couch
Teacher
Olton High School

Mr. Ray Kinnison
Superintendent

Ms. Georgana Nafzger
Teacher
Webb Elementary School

Mr. Vernon Paul
Principal
Olton Middle School

Ms. Elfida Perez
Parent

Mr. Mike Perry
Business Representative

Dr. Joe Priest
Principal
Webb Elementary School

Ms. Melissa Rivera
Student
Olton High School

PAMPA ISD

Mr. Jay Barrett
Secondary Teacher

Ms. Betty Beyer
Elementary Librarian

Mr. Daniel Coward
Secondary Principal

Mr. John Curry
School Board Member

Mr. Harry Griffith
Superintendent

Mr. Darville Orr
Business Representative

Mr. Tim Powers
Elementary Principal

PAMPA ISD (continued)

Mrs. Cay Warner
Parent

Mr. Greg Wilson
Student

SOCORRO ISD

Ms. Ana Araujo
Parent

Mr. R. Jerry Barber
Superintendent

Ms. Dona Descamps
Principal
H.D. Hilley Elementary

Mr. Jose Dominguez
Student
Soccoro H.S.

Mr. Jesse Gandara
School Board Member

Mr. Paul James
Teacher
Socorro High School

Ms. Robin Keith
Business Representative

Mr. Robert Martinez
Principal
Socorro High School

Ms. Kathy Resendez
Teacher
H.D. Hilley Elementary School

SPRING BRANCH ISD

Mr. Eduardo Aguirre
Business Representative

Dr. Gloria Fishman
Principal
Memorial Drive Elementary

Mr. Dennis Kelly
School Board Member

Mrs. Bobbie Lawrence
Parent

Mrs. Virginia Leiker
Principal
Memorial High

Ms. Ann Lewis
Teacher
Housman Elementary

Dr. Gary Mathews
Associate Superintendent

Ms. Pat Millerick
Teacher
Stratford High

Ms. Anne-Marie Yu
Student
Spring Woods High

TYLER ISD

Mrs. Claudia Carroll
President
City Council PTA

Dr. Jack L. Davidson
Superintendent

TYLER ISD (continued)

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Student
John Tyler High School

Mr. Tom Jordan
Business Representative

Dr. John B. Love
Principal
Douglas Elementary

Mrs. Carol Maddox
School Board Member

Mrs. Emma Nunn
Teacher
John Tyler High School

Mrs. Sharon Roy
Teacher
Woods Elementary

Dr. Bill Smoot
Principal
Robert E. Lee High School

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